

Hafa Adai!

PSS, CAO to collaborate in hiring bilingual instructors. **PAGE 2**

Bill for parity in coverage, payments for mental health services now a law. **PAGE 3**

\$1

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UNTIL NEW MARKETS EMERGE

Korea will remain NMI's largest tourist market



KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

The Marianas Visitors Authority hosted its annual general membership meeting last week at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

South Korea has been the CNMI's largest tourism market before the COVID-19 pandemic and the Marianas Visitors Authority expects this to remain true until new, larger markets emerge.

This was one of the biggest take-aways from last week's general membership meeting of the MVA, See **KOREA** on Page 4



KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Marianas Visitors Authority Korea office representative Seijin Kim presents updates on the Korea market during MVA's general membership meeting last week at the Crown Plaza Resort Saipan.

CNMI initiates talks of housing Guam inmates in Saipan prison

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

CNMI Corrections Commissioner Anthony Torres and Guam Department of Corrections director Fred Bordallo Jr. are set to talk about housing some of Guam's inmates at the Saipan facility to help ease overcrowding at the Guam prison.

Torres said in a press conference yesterday that he is set to meet with Bordallo and a few Guam DOC officials tomorrow to discuss See **PRISON** on Page 4



Torres

TO ALLOW ENTRY INTO NMI SANS VISA: 'Pursue EVS-TAP for Chinese tourists'

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) has introduced a joint resolution to request Gov. Arnold I. Palacios to advocate for the increased security of the tour-



Hofschneider

ism industry, while promoting economic recovery, through the promulgation of the CNMI Economic Vitality & Security Travel Authorization Program and other measures.

That program was one of the See **PURSUE** on Page 4



CHRYSTAL MARINO

Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Simon Graf, center, stands with two of the three artists who worked on the traditional Christmas tree and representatives of the hotel's silent auction beneficiary, the Saipan Humane Society, shortly after Hyatt's 43rd anniversary celebration last Saturday in Garapan.

Hyatt celebrates 43rd birthday, unveils traditional Christmas tree

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

To usher in the holiday season while simultaneously

celebrating 43 years on the island, Hyatt Regency Saipan unveiled one of the very first traditional Christmas trees See **HYATT** on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Fork & Spoon: House of Sizzling lately has become well known also for its unique desserts.

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WORLD

Israel's ground offensive expanded to every part of the Gaza Strip, its military said Sunday.

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LIFE & STYLE

Beyoncé's concert picture, "Renaissance: A Film by Beyoncé," opened in first place with \$21 million in North American ticket sales.

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Public School System officials led by interim Education commissioner Donna M. Flores and Carolinian Affairs Office executive assistant Felix Nogis met Friday to discuss the challenges and difficulties in hiring bilingual classroom instructors. Also in the photo are PSS Human Resource officer Lucretia B. Deleon Guerrero, and PSS program managers Asapmar Ogumoro, Vinnie Orsini, Jonas Barcinas (in his capacity as former Chamorro Carolinian and Language and Heritage Studies program manager), and Carolinian curriculum writer Monica Pua.

Local

PSS, CAO will join forces in hiring bilingual instructors

Interim Education commissioner Donna M. Flores led a team of five Public School System officials in meeting Carolinian Affairs Office executive assistant Felix Nogis last Friday to bring good news: five new Carolinian instructors were hired and more to come.

The meeting between Flores and Nogis also led to a breakthrough, after months of back-and-forth, about working together to hire bilingual teachers. This was the first time for a sitting chief state school superintendent to meet with the Carolinian Affairs Office to address the issue of lack of bilingual teachers.

Flores was joined by Human Resource officer Lucretia B. Deleon Guerrero, and PSS program managers Asapmar Ogumoro, Vinnie Orsini, Jonas Barcinas (in his capacity as former Chamorro Carolinian and Language and Heritage Studies program manager), and Carolinian curriculum writer Monica Pua.

"Thank you for meeting with us. With the support of our BOE chairperson Antonio Borja and the entire BOE, and our central office team, we are here to meet with you to make good efforts in answering and finding ways to address our lack of bilingual teachers—both Carolinian and Chamorro," Flores told Nogis.

"As you have been made aware by my predecessors, PSS has been earnestly working to ensure that we are able to address the lack of and inadequate bilingual classroom instructors because of various reasons, primarily, among others, due to recruitment difficulties, minimum hiring requirements, and lack of local funding," explained Flores.

Both Flores and Nogis

agreed to cooperate and partner to address the issue.

"Coming together is a positive sign," Nogis said. "Getting together and talking about finding a common ground on the issue is a positive sign."

New hires

Deleon Guerrero told Nogis that five new instructors under an independent contract have been hired within the past month and were assigned to various public schools on Saipan.

Deleon Guerrero said they are optimistic PSS will eventually fill the gap with the need for bilingual classroom instructors.

Flores said PSS will work with CAO by building on Nogis' "recommendations and advocacy."

"We at PSS truly admire your advocacy and focus on promoting Carolinian language instruction at the schools" added Flores.

The hiring of the five new additional bilingual instructors is the result of PSS' decision to provide a third option (alternative) by giving local residents the opportunity to be class instructors.

Under a professional service contract with PSS, the Carolinian instructors are afforded every professional growth opportunity given to all classroom teachers in the school district.

"Our newly hired [Carolinian] instructors have been provided with and availed of professional support that PSS provides to all classroom teachers: professional development and training, and invited to participate in the mentee and mentorship program. These opportunities will help

See PSS on Page 4

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Hafa Adai
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Bill for parity in coverage, payments for mental health services now law

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**

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REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios has signed into law a bill that would establish parity in coverage and payments for mental health and behavioral health services delivered through telehealth and in-person.

House Bill 23-47, SD1, is now Public Law 23-13. Rep. Malcolm J. Omar (Ind-Saipan) is the author of the legislation.

The House passed the bill without amendments last July. The Senate passed it with amendments last October and returned it to the House. Last Nov. 6, the House unanimously accepted the Senate's amendments and passed the legislation.

At the Nov. 6 House session, Omar said the Senate's only revision was the addition of Behavioral Health to the title.

Omar stated in the bill that this legislation contributes to the expansion of mental health services by requiring parity for payment of telehealth services in the CNMI.

According to the bill, to implement the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact, or PSYPACT, and increase public access in the CNMI to professional psychological and other mental health services by telehealth, there is a need to ensure the public is able to afford those services by requiring private payer, Medicaid, and other governmental plans or policies to provide coverage similar to in-person services.

The bill amended the Commonwealth Code by adding a new Chapter 8 that deals with Mental Health and

Behavioral Coverage.

Those who testified before the Legislature to support the bill were Community Guidance Center director Joseph

Kevin Villagomez, licensed clinical psychologist Dr. Anne V. Erhard, acting Commerce secretary Francisco Cabrera, Community Solutions presi-

dent and former representative Sheila Jack Babauta, and special assistant for the Climate Policy and Planning Program and former representative

Christina E. Sablan.

Among those who provided written comments in support of the legislation were Commonwealth Healthcare

Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muña and Marianas Office-Micronesian Legal Services Corp. directing attorney Jane Mack.

Rip currents until late Tuesday night

The public is being warned that there is a high risk of rip currents along east facing reefs of the Marianas through late Tuesday night.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, dangerous rip currents will be present along east-facing reefs of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

The public is being warned to stay out of the waters near east facing reefs. Swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. (PR)



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BOOST committee hearing may start next year

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The hearing of the House of Representatives committee that is investigating the previous administration's Building Optimism, Opportunity, and Stability Together grant program may start in 2024 after

three contractors asked for a 30-day extension to produce the documents the committee had subpoenaed. Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan), who chairs the House Special Committee on Feder-

» **3 contractors request for extension to submit documents**

al Assistance & Disaster-related Funding, disclosed yesterday that Robert Travilla, Salina Sapp, and Shayne Villanueva have requested for an extension to turn in the documents the

committee is seeking. "There's a lot of information that we requested from them [and] we're granting them an extension to produce those documents," Yumul said. Right now, the lawyers for Travilla, Sapp, and Villanueva are constantly communicating with the House's

counsel, he added. The three were in charge of the BOOST program's marketing. The BOOST Program used \$17 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds that, according to some House members, were handed out to many of the previous administration's cronies. Yumul said the hearings have been delayed because of scheduling of the three's law-

yers and the number of days they requested to produce the documents. He said he will probably call a meeting next week to get an update. He said they will also discuss next week the issuance of subpoenas to get documents from former Department of Finance secretary David DLG Atalig and former Department of Commerce Economic Development director Jesus Taisague.

HYATT

From page 1

on its birthday celebration last Saturday at its location in Garapan, complete with a tree-lighting ceremony and Christmas carolers. It was learned at the ceremony that the 12-foot tree was a collaborative effort of three local artists: Tyler Warwick, Albert Emanonipiy and Pat Mareham, with Warwick and Emanonipiy taking charge of building the structure, and Mareham in charge of the decor.

Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Simon Graf thanked each artist for lending their talent to make the tree and to the community for letting Hyatt be a part of their lives. As a part of the Hyatt's celebration of its anniversary, it will be hosting a silent auction, with the Saipan Humane Society as its beneficiary. In a conversation with Warwick, he said that building the tree began in October, and he knew that just finding and preparing the materials alone was tedious work, but after some hesitation on his part, he and

Emanonipiy began the build. "We never built anything like this before. I myself have had three years experience in building and carving, but our brother, Albert, is the one more experienced than I am. I did a lot of the fetching the sticks and the weaving but he knows the tie points and how it's going to look like," he said, adding that Emanonipiy grew up in Satawal in the Federated States of Micronesia and he was raised building traditional canoes and houses. Warwick explained that he couldn't have done it without

his partner and that it was a collaborative effort. Warwick said the build itself was based on their knowledge of building traditional houses, except with a tepee-like structure. "We build traditional houses so we use those techniques and style..." he said. He and Emanonipiy used close to 50 coconut fronds and used no nails to build the structure. Rather, they tied it together in the traditional manner.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

PURSUE

From page 1

recommendations of 902 Consultation special representatives in their report dated May 15, 2019, to then-president Donald Trump. As envisioned by the 902 panels, the CNMI Economic Vitality & Security Travel Authorization Program or EVS-TAP would be a sub-program of the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program that balances visitor ease with enhanced security provisions and transparency. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the CNMI EVS-TAP will allow prescreened nationals of the People's Republic of China to travel to the CNMI without a visa under specified conditions. Hofschneider's Senate

Joint Resolution 23-07 asks Palacios to request for the publication of the interim rule creating the CNMI EVS-TAP by DHS. The resolution requests the governor to seek regulatory amendments to the CNM-Only Transitional Worker program to extend the list of countries whose nationals are eligible to participate in the H-2B nonimmigration worker program, similar to those seeking participation in the CW program. The resolution also urges Palacios to initiate communication and collaborative channels with the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS, to provide information on proposed foreign investments for consideration and review of the national security implications of such invest-

ment, if any. Hofschneider stated in the resolution that, in the absence of actions taken to rebuild the CNMI's China market, the Legislature request that a plan be submitted to the Legislature on the steps proposed by the CNMI government to rebuild economic activity, government revenues, and tourism arrivals that will meet the needs of the government and community to the levels seen prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Such a plan should include impacts of the pivot from the China market on employment, economic activity, and the ability for the government to meet its obligations from alternatives being pursued outside of the China tourism market, he said. According to the joint resolution, the CNMI fac-

es significant challenges, including reduced government revenues, diminished resources for public services, and prolonged stagnation of the commercial sector due to the global pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, tourism arrivals to the CNMI exceeded 500,000 per year, with visitors arriving primarily from South Korea, China, and to a decreasing extent, Japan. The fiscal year 2023 arrivals of 194,661 represents a 54% decline from arrivals seen in fiscal 2019. Arrivals from South Korea have fallen by 17% since fiscal 2019, Japan arrivals by 38%, and arrivals from China are 98% below pre-pandemic levels. A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

PRISON

From page 1

having the CNMI house some of Guam's inmates to curb its overcrowding dilemma. "We will be meeting to discuss the plan to have Guam inmates brought and detained [on] Saipan. We're going to help Guam [and they'll in turn] help us. We all know that Guam is facing some overcrowding issues and we want to alleviate that overcrowding by housing some inmates here while also generating revenue," he said. By housing inmates from Guam, DOC would be able to generate revenue as well so it's a win-win situation, Torres explained. "[This is] a revenue-generating stream we're looking into. As an example, we start with 100 inmates from Guam. That's 100 inmates at \$120 per diem—that's \$4.3 million a year. Then I can identify and allocate those generated funds...to fixing DOC's kitchen, expand DOC's agricultural outreach, and other rehabilitative programs. I'm not going to wait

around for federal grants to be awarded. I'm going to see what we can do to generate funds to help our staff and inmates." Torres was quick to add, though, that he also prioritizes the CNMI's public safety and will handpick inmates who will be sent over to ensure these inmates are nonviolent convicts who are healthy and strong and can contribute to the CNMI. Saipan's correctional facility can hold a little over 500 inmates, but is currently housing only a little over 200 individuals. "So, we have space," said Torres. Guam DOC officials will also be taking a tour of the Saipan facility and checking out DOC's rehabilitative outreach programs. "We are going to meet so we can sit down and talk about this matter and we're going to conduct a tour of our facilities and probably even some of our outreach programs to help rehabilitate inmates," he said. A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

KOREA

From page 1

with MVA's South Korea office representative Seijin Kim sharing that, as of November, Korea made up 82% of the CNMI's total visitors. In a separate interview with MVA managing director Chris Concepcion, he said the Korea market is nearly fully recovered when compared to 2019 numbers and affirmed that Korea has become the CNMI's largest market post-pandemic. Concepcion said the MVA expects Korea to continue to be the CNMI's leading tourist market well into the foreseeable future. "Our projection is that

the Korea market will continue to be the No. 1 market in the foreseeable future. It's a matter of numbers. The outbound travel from Korea is almost fully recovered compared to pre-COVID numbers. Japan is less than half of the number it was pre-COVID. For the next few years, until much larger markets in our region emerge, Korea will be [our largest market]," he said. According to Kim's presentation last week, as of October 2023, 148,081 of the nearly 180,000 visitors who traveled to Saipan were Korean tourists. The remaining 31,000-plus were a mix of other nationalities, including Japan and China. Compared to Guam, the

CNMI's tourism industry has already recovered about 76%, Kim said, when compared to 2019 numbers. Guam is at 58%. Back in 2019, the CNMI secured about 260,843 flight seats from various markets to Saipan. As of last month, the CNMI had about 198,503. In comparison to Guam, Saipan's tourism industry is recovering at a much faster pace, Kim said. Right now, Guam has secured about 726,084 flight seats in total; in 2023, Guam had about 423,776. In terms of the Korean tourism market, the CNMI had 189,155 seats booked to Saipan in 2019; in 2023, about 148,081 seats from Korea to Saipan were secured. This is

about a 78% recovery rate. Comparatively, Guam saw about 619,396 Korean tourists visit the island in 2019; in 2023, less than half of that was seen, with only 298,992 inbound travelers from Korea. To put that in perspective, Guam's Korean market has recovered about 48%. Kim assured that MVA's Korea team continues to work hard in marketing the CNMI as a leisure destination. Currently, Korea has three flights to Saipan; Jeju Air, T'Way Airlines, and Asiana Airlines. Jeju and T'Way currently provide daily flights from Korea to Saipan, while Asiana only provides two flights a week: every Wednesday and Saturday.

PSS

From page 2

build our local workforce," Deleon Guerrero told Nogis. PSS is required by local and federal statutes and guidelines when hiring classroom teachers, that a person must have a minimum college degree. The reason for the RFP for bilingual teachers is the "flexibility" that the PSS has implemented to hire locally sourced and trained bilingual instructors. This was implemented with the direction and support of the BOE. For many years now, despite PSS' aggressive work in recruiting teachers, the mandated minimum requirements have hindered the hiring Carolinian bilingual instructors. The basic requirements for a bilingual teacher include employment application, police clearance, résumé, high school diploma, and official transcripts. In 2017, the BOE approved PSS' redesign of its instructional coaching program,

which led to the review and assessment of hiring classroom teachers, including Carolinian and Chamorro bilingual instructors. The RFP is the third alternative to attract both Chamorro and Carolinian to apply for instructors. **Joint effort** Nogis has offered to assist PSS in lobbying for funding for the hiring of additional Chamorro and Carolinian Language and Heritage Studies instructors under the RFP/contract system implemented by PSS. While the number of CCLHS bilingual instructors needed in every school depends on the student population, PSS-HRO said it would at least need at least 30 bilingual instructors. This will cost an additional \$1.4 million in local funds. Nogis also said his office had been assisting PSS in "recruiting" bilingual teachers. A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

MCS honorees for 1Q school year 2023-2024

Mount Carmel School congratulates these students for making it to the first quarter of school year 2023-2024 President's List and Honor Roll (Note that the names are arranged alphabetically by first name)

PRESIDENT'S LIST

Students must have a GPA of 4.00 or above and must attain character marks of VG or above.

1st Grade

- Caitlyn Mae A. Matsunaga
 - Emberlee Shae S.
- Westbrook
- Erin Rousce P. De Belen
 - Jaxon Bryce P. Camacho
 - Nasisa Olivia K. Demapan
 - Stieven Zane A. Dimafelix
 - Tsuyoshiro Aries K.H. Tutiy
 - Tylor Kang
 - Zun H. Wang

2nd Grade

- Alexandra Victoria Stuart
 - Avalyn Mae N. Lizama
 - Francine Jaymee O. Pineda
 - Isaiah Francisco P.
- Villagomez
- Liv Mariana R. Taijeron
 - Logan Jesus D. Tenorio
 - Rhianna Kay G. Kautz
 - Zhane Graeson V. Jugos

3rd Grade

- Ariah Kady N. Deleon
- Guerrero
- Arielle Jane G. Aniciete
 - Aubrey Nicole A.
- Matsunaga
- Benz Elliott C. Santos
 - Brayden Kane P. Taguchi
 - Carlie W. Bai
 - Farrell Huan C. Dela Santa
 - Gabriella Salome D.
- Gamab
- Ines F. Maratita
 - Jeremy Sho B. Sasamoto
 - Jesse Joseph Gregory J.
- Palacios
- Ji Yoo Lee
 - Leilani Soledad N. Castro
 - Mya Joy C. Manibusan
 - Rockson R. Cabrera
 - Sumai Francine B. Castro
 - Vincent C. Salavaria

4th Grade

- Ava Monae C. Basa
 - Denise Kamille W. Iglesias
 - Ezekiel Ma'nu'i P.
- Villagomez
- Gabriella Jo C. Tenorio
 - Isaiah Preston Paul
 - Khoen Alexander C. Torres
 - Maverick Yamanaka
 - Rei Ezekiel P. De Belen
 - Scott Jonathan Y. Muna
 - Youngwoo (Stella) Choi
 - Yuna Yu

5th Grade

- Aiyana Carmen B.
- Pangellinan
- Erika Loreen T. Cuyugan
 - Friella Huanne C. Dela
- Santa
- Jonathan L. Zhang
 - Kendra Elise P. Camacho
 - Kirk Ivan E. De Perio
 - Logan Kane M. Propst

6th Grade

- Chloe Anne Marie A.
- Matsunaga
- Ezaela Patrice M.
- Camacho
- Jeongwoo (Ryan) Choi
 - Jiwoo Lee
 - Kathleen B. Cano

7th Grade

- Gonshiro Pedro Jose S.
- Sasamoto
- Hyun Woo (Kyle) Cho
 - Maria Y. Guerrero
 - O-Ren Fumiyo D.
- Sasamoto

8th Grade

- Alexia Aulene M. Rubia
 - Arthur Angel O. Deliva
 - Avania Clarise E.
- Quichocho
- Cecilia R. Villagomez
 - Ciana Lei B. Demapan
 - David John Romaldo S.
- Apatang
- Do Geon Kim
 - Isabella Soledad G.
- Demapan
- Jadine Nicole P.
- Pangellinan
- Jener Franz O. Pineda
 - Jessie Chen

- Julius Sheu
- Katherine Hwang
- Kayla Rose Larson
- Layla Carmen Ann J.

Palacios

- Remiegem B. Melchor
- Victor Neil M. Santos

9th Grade

- Ana Guadalupe M.
- Villagomez
- Hope Gianna McQuay
 - Jeffrey G. Concepcion
 - Jose Clarence S. Tenorio
 - Josephine L. Lopez
 - Nicole Angela S.
- Pangilinan
- Rafael Elijah P. De Belen
 - Sage R. Villagomez
 - Sarah Angela B. Melchor

10th Grade

- Alexandria Ysabelle
- Dysangco
- Arwen Hannah N.
- Bartolata
- Camron Xavier S.
- Pangilinan
- Chae Eun Kim
 - Emmanuel C. Pontiveros
 - Gavril Myles Santiago
 - Heleyna Frielle C. Dela
- Santa
- Jessiana B. Tenorio
 - Leonard Jake B. Regalado
 - Mya DLG. Pangellinan
 - Nyla N. Deleon Guerrero
 - Oscar Bien R. Buenafior
 - Seunghee (Sunny) Jeon
 - Therese Joy O. Ogo
 - Victor Nash M. Santos
 - William Matthew B. Cano

11th Grade

- Alvin Hong
 - Ari James Toskas
 - Chealzka M. Navarro
 - Claire Regina G. Kautz
 - Jada B. Chang
 - Jae Yun Jung
 - Jay Francis Dominic O.
- Pineda
- Jeewoo Son
 - Maili B. Peter
 - Malina Rose B. Tenorio
 - Rafael Mykel Gozon
 - Seungeun Ha
 - Tricia Antonnette J.

Palacios

- Vayden I. Matagolai
- Yunseong Seol

12th Grade

- Angel Lou D. Buensalido
- Avah Marie C. Torres
- Bernice Shane Q. Sabino
- Brandon Lee
- Breanna Sue L. Mafnas
- Charles Pablo (Chaz) S.

Cepeda

- Earle Gabreil (Gabby) L.

San Nicolas

- Elisa Ellen E. Blanco
- Eunkyuu (Joey) Hong
- Gwen Tiffany D. Gamab
- Jan Marini P. Millo
- Jazmin Jay A. Tagabuel
- Jerry Chen
- Jhazmyn Nichole C.

Valiente

- Juliana T. Vergara
- Kevin Jia Q. Bao
- Kriselle Bryana Mitzu

A. Drilon

- Krissy Rease F. Cepeda
- Leyonne Alfred F. Tolentino
- Luke G. Ubilas
- Maria Yoshie C. Torres
- Miguel Nathan N.

Bartolata

- Natalie Gabrielle E. Ano
- Palikkun S. George
- Paul Angelo Santos
- Paul William D. Camacho
- Raymana Owen D. Salas
- Ruben Antonio C. Guerrero
- Sanghyeok Lee
- Tyana Kisha T. Tesiro
- Xin Wen Jin

HONOR ROLL

Students must have a GPA of 3.66 or above and must not have any behavior grade of U or NI.

1st Grade

- Averyrose Malia B. Allen
- Carlos B. Deleon Guerrero
- Cole H. Pangellinan
- Coral Jade S. Aldan
- Emily Kang
- Ethan D. Brown
- Kenneth Grey C. McDonald
- Matteo John P. Rizo
- Mikael Zhukovskii
- Renzo Gavriel R. David

- Riacca Manahane
- Riley Paige C. Duenas
- Thomas Flores
- Yzzabella F. Vergel de Dios

2nd Grade

- Bentley Elaine C. Santos
- Chace Jaret H. Tomokane
- Chloe Jodia B. Mostales
- Ethan Robert F. Dasalla
- Grayson Eunu Jo
- Jovoni Dre T. Cruz
- Landon Jay C. Pangellinan
- Liam Tasi S. Ehsa
- Miyah P. Kaipat
- Yanbin (Jacob) Cui

3rd Grade

- Dongmin Jang
- Eduardo Vicente D. Diaz II
- Juliana Riley H. Apelo
- Miriam Grace Flores
- Yanchen (Henry) Cui

4th Grade

- Aleaya T. Bermudes
- Allen Gil
- Aycee Rianne T. Quitugua
- Gino Marvin T. Deleon

Guerrero

- Jace S. Pangellinan

5th Grade

- Alana Lei C. Macaranas
- Aliyani M. Basa
- Anah Bellah M. Guerrero
- Brayden Luke P. Repata
- Chloe-Mae Therese

Taimanao

- Christian T. Igisomar
 - Clarise Faith C.
- Garamonte
- Ian James B. De Leon
 - Jacob Asher N. Villacrusis
 - Jake Peter C. Deleon

Guerrero Jr.

- Joseph Francisco D. White
- Mateo Moctezuma A.

Almada

- Neia Dolana Noreyemal

D. Tagabuel

- Okamura Jaxon
- Itisoorschigh A. Tagabuel
- Sera Y. Guerrero
- Seungmin Jang
- Soli F. Maratita

6th Grade

- Althea Dionn B. Lauron
- Ava Carmina B. Sablan
- Jayda Milan T. Torres
- Karl Angelo M. Diaz
- Kennani Vinae C.

Villagomez

- Ki Eun Lee
- Lilliana Terie A. Villagomez
- Lily Chantrea R. Lim
- Lydia J. Xian
- Miana Dolores B. Delacruz
- Reef Cole F. Reyes
- Von Derick A. Lauron

7th Grade

- Brielle V. Malonzo
- Caleb John S. Aldan
- Franklin Huang
- Joey Claude B. Mostales

- Kainoa B. Tenorio
- Kazzandra Arielle A. Drilon
- Logan C. Matsumoto
- Mia RemaeGuerrero
- Raymond Earl Hazlett
- Russell Ethan P. De Belen
- Trisha Juliana D. Abuan

8th Grade

- Aubrey Rae T. Quitugua
- Cassidee Jolina C. Flores
- Cyril Michael S.

Pangilinan

- Dylan Jacob O. Camacho
- Heather Elizabeth Pain

A. Sin

- Janessa Francine T. Arriola
- John Matthew L. Ellama
- Ju Hwan Hyun
- Kingston T. Deleon

Guerrero

- Mary Shelley C. Deleon

Guerrero

- Siwoo Lee

9th Grade

- Akoni Jesus C. Matsumoto
- Bernard Sean Q. Sabino
- Carly Kate P. Dela Cruz
- Christine Rosanne N.

Castro

- Enzo Umeki D. Sasamoto
- Jeen Lee
- Kaden Christian M. Propst
- Kylee Dee'ara M.

Manglona

- Maya Elaine McQuay
- Patricia Ann Matsumoto
- Patrick V. Guerrero

- Stephanie Joyce C. Sevilla

10th Grade

- Annieskha F. Arreza
- Anthony Christian E.

Rivera

- Ayung Lee
- Danika P. Atalig
- Edsel Benedict A.

Pagtalunan

- Jaclyn Rose Davis
- Lance Jericho A. Javier
- Luis C. Manibusan
- Michael Q. Mercado Jr
- Quince Emanuele O. Tizon

11th Grade

- Aryana Carmen A.
- Taimanao
- Breana Ysabel A.

Patawaran

- Chelsy Anne P. Reyes
- Earl Pete Jacob M.


Lacandazo

- Laizza Vianca A. Mallari
- Mia Ysabela D. Abuan
- Sihyeon Choi

12th Grade


- Ashley Jo A. Sablan
- Devin Jordan M. Propst
- Irish Leilani Castro
- Jared Joshua G. Terlaje
- Kristin Jewel P. Dela Cruz
- L'Wina D. Atalig
- Leo Bang
- Xiang Jun (Jerry) Zeng

(MCS)



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

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Job Vacancy Announcement

JVA No. 24-029

POSITION TITLE:

DEPARTMENT:

LOCATION:

ANNUAL SALARY:

CONTRACT:

POSITION(S):

Trades Assistant

Wastewater Division

Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA

\$16,742.00 to \$22,602.00 per annum, Non- Exempt

Not Contracted

Three (3)

The incumbent will be under the overall supervision of the Drinking Water & Wastewater Division Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the Wastewater Division.

Duties:

- The Trades Assistant assists with installations, repairs and general maintenance in assigned service area; operates motorized vehicles, equipment machinery, and hand and power tools.
- Performs routine and preventative maintenance on equipment, vehides, systems and/or infrastructure; performs basic inspections; and conducts basic troubleshooting of issues.
- Responds to trouble calls as needed.
- Prepares job site for work including gathering and setting up materials and supplies, and setting work safety barriers for protection and to direct traffic flow away from work site.
- Gathers, cleans and returns equipment, materials and supplies used.
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete.
- Monitors equipment; takes readings and collects data; documents equipment readings; prepares and submits data and work reports.
- Performs inventory spot checks to ensure adequate materials and supplies are available for daily maintenance activities.
- Monitor and perform preventive maintenance on sewer lines, manholes, and lift stations.
- Assist in taking treatment plant readings and performing adjustments.
- Cleans, maintains, repairs and paints submersible pumps.
- Lifts, inspects and replace submersible pumps.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education.

Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic mathematical concepts; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology. Principles and procedures of service area assigned; Inspecting and troubleshooting principles; Preventive maintenance principles; Inventory control principles.

Skills in: Providing customer service; Reading maps and drawings; Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.


Licensing/Certification:

- Valid U.S. Driver's License with appropriate class;


All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: You may submit your CUC Employment Application and/or resume at the Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, from Monday to Friday, 7:30am – 4:30pm. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota can drop it off at the Tinian and Rota Administration office. Application and resume can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 24-028

Opening Date: Friday, November 24, 2023

Closing Date: Wednesday, December 07, 2023

POSITION TITLE:

DEPARTMENT:

LOCATION:

ANNUAL SALARY:

CONTRACT:

POSITION(S):

Engineer

Water & Wastewater Engineering Division

Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA

\$40,084.00 to \$54,113.00 per annum, Exempt

Two Year Contract, Subject to Renewal

One (1)

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Chief Engineer or his/her designee.

Duties:

- Assists in the management of multiple, complex projects to advance CUC mission and vision and to protect public health and the environment.
- Coordinates with CUC departments, contractors, manufacturers, suppliers and other parties to ensure accurate and timely completion of program requirements.
- Develops plans, specifications, and technical reports.
- Prepares complex engineering calculations, reports, specifications, contracts, and drawings.
- Assists in the preparation of reports for grant funding programs.
- Acts as construction manager for water and wastewater projects.
- Conducts field investigations and inspections.
- Provides system troubleshooting and system evaluations for operational staff.
- Supervises junior engineers and technicians to ensure the timely and accurate completion of projects.
- Conducts employee performance evaluations, corrective actions, conducts interviews, and provides recommendations regarding hiring and disciplinary actions.
- Responds to emergencies both during and after business hours.
- To perform field measurements for distance, elevation, flows, pressures and other elements related to water and sewer system designs, including configuration of water/sewer facilities, utilizing surveying equipment and GIS system.
- Design size and length of water mains, capacity (pumping rate and head) of booster stations, size, slope, and distance of sewer gravity mains and force mains, size, pumping capacity, and liquid level control of Lift stations.
- Design drawings to portray facilities to be constructed based on completed design and specification preparation for water systems and water sources, transmission and distribution pipelines and storage tank, including wastewater systems and facilities sewer lines, sewer pumping stations and treatment plants.
- Writes reports for engineering feasibility analysis, evaluations, such as water and wastewater flow, well production, water loss, electrical consumption, system hydraulics.
- Prepare scopes of work for a variety of A&E consultant services related to existing and proposed water and sewer systems; Analysis of water system operation performance by pressure zone.
- Operations support such as review of operating mode and system configuration, water leaks detection, repairs and recovery of water loss.
- Ensure proper installation and monitoring of pilot control system using supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA).
- Effects repairs to multiple emergency power generators for the wastewater lift stations;
- Responsible for overseeing the engineering aspect of the water and wastewater system operations modifications, maintenance and repairs.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil, Environmental, or Mechanical Engineering and four years of related engineering experience.

Knowledge of: Engineering principles and practices; mathematical, pumping and hydraulics, and wastewater conveyance and treatment concepts; project management principles; construction techniques; safe work practices; applicable Federal, State, and/or Local laws, rules, and regulations.

Skills in: Interpreting and applying Federal, State, and/or Local laws, rules, and regulations; reading, understanding, and preparing drawings for construction contracts; preparing a variety of technical reports and/or documentation; presenting technical information to management, public groups, and other related individuals; interpreting and preparing specifications; estimating construction costs; conducting studies. Able to use computers and related software applications; communicate, interact with co-workers, supervisor, contractors, representatives of other agencies and departments, and the general public to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction; use AutoCAD to prepare plans for utility projects and contracts is a plus. Registration as an Engineer-In-Training in the CNMI, Guam, or any State of the United States is preferred but not required. Applicants licensed as a Professional Engineer in the CNMI, Guam, or any State of the United States is encouraged to apply.

• **Licensing:**

- Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.

• **Physical Demands:**

- Occasional lifting of objects; Subject to standing, walking sitting, bending, reaching, kneeling, pushing and pulling.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday and Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

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BEYOND BORDERS AND BOUNDARIES:
Embracing adaptation and teamwork with Ensign Peyton Phillips

By CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER
SARA MUIR
U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia /Sector
Guam

SANTA RITA, Guam—Ensign Peyton Phillips is not just an officer aboard the USCGC *Myrtle Hazard* (WPC 1139); he is a testament to the rich diversity and depth of experiences that contribute to the strength and versatility of the U.S. Coast Guard.

His personal story intertwines cultural immersion, academic rigor, and a legacy of aviation, painting a picture of an individual whose journey is as unique as it is inspiring.

A 2023 graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, he serves as the first lieutenant on *Myrtle Hazard*, a role both



USCG Ensign Peyton Phillips of USCGC *Myrtle Hazard* (WPC 1139) plots a course based on information from Papua New Guinea's National Fisheries Authority during a combined patrol on Aug. 26, 2023, in the Coral Sea off Papua New Guinea.

demanding and dynamic. On these high-speed, advanced vessels, the first lieutenant is essential in managing the synergy between the ship's departments, ensuring readiness for a variety of missions.

The FRCs, designed for rapid deployment, are at the forefront of the U.S. Coast Guard's efforts to maintain security and enforce laws in the vast and challenging Blue Pacific waters. The small crew size of an FRC, typically around 24 members, means that each member plays a critical and multifaceted role, often far from the familiar comforts of home.

This creates a unique set of challenges in terms of operations and logistics, requiring a high degree of coordination, resilience, and adaptability. However, it's not just the logistical and operational challenges that define life on a Guam-based FRC. There's an element of excitement and pioneering spirit as these ships are pushing the boundaries of the U.S. Coast Guard's operational capabilities and setting many firsts.

Phillips, reflecting on the difference between his current role and his academic life at the Academy, said, "It's a lot

more than theory and analyzing numbers. Every day is different, and there's a thrill in knowing that what we do out here really matters, not just for us but for the entire region." Phillips' proficiency in Japanese, a skill he developed during his formative years in Japan and Taiwan, was pivotal during the *Myrtle Hazard*'s recent expeditionary patrol in support of Operation Blue Pacific travelling from Guam to Australia with notable time in Papua New Guinea.

This mission was significant in operationalizing a newly signed bilateral maritime law enforcement agreement with Papua New Guinea and conducting the first joint patrol between the two nations.


His language skills were particularly useful in facilitating fisheries boardings within Papua New Guinea's exclusive economic zone. Reflecting on the values he absorbed in Japan, Phillips stated, "Living in Japan, I was deeply influenced by the culture's emphasis on doing everything to the best of one's ability, and finding 'ikigai', a sense of purpose in what you do. There is a deep respect for others. This has greatly shaped my approach in the Coast Guard, where every action and decision hold significant weight and purpose."

But the success of Phillips'

Japanese application on this patrol did not happen in a vacuum. He had the opportunity to collaborate with cadets Genzo and Seiji Gonzales from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy earlier in the summer. The Gonzales brothers, hailing from Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, spent their summer break from the Academy with U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, gaining invaluable hands-on experience. Their background, which includes a verbal understanding of Japanese passed down through their family, complemented Phillips' reading proficiency in the language. This synergy led to the creation of a quick reference Japanese translation sheet, a crucial tool for effective communication during radio calls and boardings of Japanese-flagged fishing vessels.

Phillips, reflecting on this collaborative effort, said, "Working with the Gonzales brothers was a great example of how different skills come together in the Coast Guard. They could speak Japanese, and I could read it. Together, we created a translation sheet that was vital for our operations. It was a bit nerve-racking at first, as I was self-conscious about my language skills, but it turned out to be an incredibly

See EMBRACING on Page 7



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 24-036

Opening Date: Friday, November 24, 2023
Closing Date: UNTIL FILLED

| | |
|--|--|
| POSITION TITLE: DEPARTMENT: LOCATION: ANNUAL SALARY: CONTRACT: POSITION(S): | Deputy Director for Electric Power Systems Executive Director Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA Commensurate with Education and Experience Two Year Contract, subject to renewal One (1) |
|--|--|

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Executive Director or his/her designee.

Duties:

- Assesses and evaluates the conditions of the operating and non-operating power plant, including the engine and its auxiliary and ancillary equipment and systems.
- Assesses and evaluates the conditions of the operating and non-operating of the power transmission and distribution systems.
- Assesses and evaluates the conditions of the operating and non-operating of the renewable energy projects and systems.
- Improves data collection and monitors plant operation and equipment condition with minimum investment, the funding of which will be arranged by CUC.
- Leads power generation in evaluation of required parts and consumable required for immediate, interim and long term needs, as per the corporation's goals.
- Prepares relevant maintenance and overhaul schedules, including Preventive Maintenance Program (PMP) of the power plant engines, their auxiliary systems and distribution facilities based on OEM recommendation and condition monitoring principles.
- Trains and leads the plant staff in implementation and the supervision of such schedules and related activities.
- Improves and increases existing power generation capacity, reliability of power generation and generation efficiencies, thereby reducing avoidable loss.
- Minimizes equipment failures and downtime through structured planning and maximizing component life through effective Operation and Maintenance (O&M).
- Leads the CUC with the preparation of specifications and bidding documents for the power plants, as required by the generation and distribution management.
- Provides guidance, management support, and supervision in streamlining and expediting the procurement of parts for power generation.
- Leads the evaluation and assessment of the plant O&M personnel, and leads them in the implementation of structured training programs for the lack of skill levels identified.
- Leads in improving skill sets and knowledge sets of the CUC staff through training, including hands-on and specific tailor-made programs.
- Performs other duties as assigned, necessary for the maintenance and improvement of electric power systems.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: Bachelor's degree from a national institute of technology in an electrical engineering curriculum plus ten (10) years of engineering experience which included responsibility for diesel electric power plant management, project management, and maintenance of diesel electric power plant equipment; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience that has led to the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and abilities as indicated above.

Ability to: Plan, schedule, assign, review, and evaluate the work of others; Coordinate the activities with those of the Power Generation Division and outside organizations; Deal tactfully and effectively with others, both inside and outside the Corporation, including representing the Corporation with other organizations and agencies; Make effective oral presentation; Monitor new developments, legislation, and other agencies' activities that may affect the work.

Thorough Knowledge of: Diesel electric power plant; Engineering principles, methods, and practices as applied to planning, design, cost estimating, construction, installation, operation, inspection, and/or operation of a wide variety of electric power facilities including power generation, alternative/renewable energy, and engineering economics; Standard sources of civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering information; Construction materials; Local building codes and structural design codes and reference sources; Appropriate safety standards and related systems as specified by the position assigned.

Working Knowledge of: Engineering principles and practices; Practices, procedures, and terminology of the engineering, operational, planning and/or technical support functions supervised; Commonwealth and Federal regulations pertaining to the work; Effective management techniques. General Knowledge of: Surveying and modern construction methods; Commonwealth laws relating to engineering, power supplies, fuel storage, and environmental impact assessments, principles and techniques of supervision.


Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards (based on assignment); Providing customer services; Filing, organizing and maintain records and files; Preparing basic reports, correspondence and documentation; Managing time and prioritizing requests; Providing attention to detail; Proofreading documents for accuracy; Identifying errors and making corrections; Reviewing and researching account information; Maintaining confidentiality of records and information; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with co-workers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

- Licensing:
 - Valid CNMI Driver's license or one from a U.S. jurisdiction with appropriate class.


Relocation Expenses: If hired from outside the CNMI, relocation expenses are negotiable; but they are not to exceed \$10,000.00 for moving to Saipan and not to exceed \$10,000.00 for moving away from Saipan. Receipts will be required for justification. Other conditions may be applicable.

Policies: The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is an equal opportunity provider and employer and will not discriminate or tolerate discrimination against any employee or applicant in any manner prohibited by law. It is also the policy of CUC to achieve a drug-free workplace and persons selected for employment will be required to pass a drug test which screens for illegal drug use prior to final appointment.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org.



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Job Vacancy Announcement

JVA No. 24-038

Opening Date: Friday, November 24, 2023
Closing Date: Wednesday, December 07, 2023

| | |
|--|---|
| POSITION TITLE: DEPARTMENT: LOCATION: ANNUAL SALARY: CONTRACT: POSITION(S): | Trades Assistant Water Division Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA \$16,742.00 to \$22,602.00 per annum, non-Exempt Not Contracted One (1) |
|--|---|

The incumbent will be under the overall supervision of the Drinking Water & Wastewater Division Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the Water Division.

Duties:

- Assists with installations, repairs, and general maintenance in assigned service area; operates motorized vehicles, equipment machinery, and hand and power tools.
- Performs routine and preventative maintenance on equipment, vehicles, systems and/or infrastructure; performs basic inspections; and conducts basic troubleshooting of issues.
- Responds to trouble calls as needed.
- Prepares job site for work including gathering and setting up materials and supplies and setting work safety barriers for protection and to direct traffic flow away from work site.
- Gathers, cleans, and returns equipment, materials and supplies used.
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete.
- Monitors equipment: takes readings and collects data; documents equipment readings; prepares and submits data and work reports.
- Performs inventory spot checks to ensure adequate materials and supplies are available for daily maintenance activities.
- Performing daily well and pump station facility maintenance, cleaning, and monitoring.
- Assisting plumbing and chlorine maintenance crew.
- Utilizing digging equipment for locating and repairing leaks.
- Repairing and securing pressure reducer valves, main valves, service lines and laterals, and booster pumps.
- Assisting with meter installation and repair.
- Collecting water samples.
- Must be able to lift objects weighing 40 lbs. or more.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education.

Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic mathematical concepts; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.


Skills in: Providing customer service; Reading maps and drawings; Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing/Certification:

- Valid U.S. Driver's License with appropriate class

All applicants may be tested, and all applicants are subject to a pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: You may submit your CUC Employment Application and/or resume at the Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building in Saipan, from Monday to Friday, 7:30am – 4:30pm. Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota can drop it off at the Tinian and Rota Administration office. Application and resume can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org



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EMBRACING

From page 6

rewarding experience.”

The collaborative effort between Phillips and the Gonzales brothers not only facilitated Phillips’ later successful communication with the operator of a Japanese fishing vessel but also underscored the value of cultural knowledge and language skills in maritime law enforcement. It is an example of the climate of teamwork on *Myrtle Hazard* and the importance of harnessing the diverse skill sets of our workforce. Phillips’ path to the U.S. Coast Guard was deeply influenced by family ties to aviation. His grandfather’s role as a structural mechanic on U.S. Coast Guard helicopters ushering in the use of the then HH-65 Dolphin helicopter and his father’s engineering background sowed the seeds of his aviation interest. He has fond memories of hours spent in small planes with his father, a private pilot. Rather than seek flight school immediately, Phillips chose to first gain a comprehensive understanding of the Coast Guard’s core missions. “I wanted to get underway experience first and see this side of the Coast Guard mission, before hopefully flying someday,” Phillips stated, explaining this thoughtful approach to his career.

Phillips’ educational background in operations research and data analytics from the Coast Guard Academy adds a layer of analytical expertise to his skill set. Speaking of his academic journey, Phillips revealed, “I started out as a marine environmental science major, and I wanted to go into the medical field if I didn’t go into the Coast Guard.” However, he eventually switched majors, influenced by strong mentors and his growing interest in data and analytics.

“There were no labs. So that was a plus,” he joked. “And the faculty, I can’t say enough good things about the math faculty.” His life experiences, marked by frequent moves and cultural adaptations, have imbued him with patience, resilience, and adaptability—traits crucial for his role in the Service. Phillips described the impact of these experiences, saying, “The change, being used to change, was a big factor. And something that’s been really helpful.” What comes next? Phillips’ aspirations to become a pilot are inspired by his family history and personal passion.

Looking forward to his future, he expressed his desire to fly, preferably rotary wing aircraft, “just being in the action.” This ambition

underscores his commitment to service and family.

Phillips’ story is a vivid illustration of how individual backgrounds, enriched by diverse experiences and skills, contribute to the collective strength and effectiveness of the U.S. Coast Guard. His contributions aboard the USCGC *Myrtle Hazard* in the short time he’s been aboard along with his multi-facet-

ed background underscore the Coast Guard’s values of respect, diversity, and adaptability, essential for its complex and international missions. Phillips’ journey from an international upbringing to his pivotal role in maritime law enforcement highlights the profound impact of diverse backgrounds in shaping a robust and adaptable service culture.



USCG

Ensign Peyton Phillips pull starts a dewatering pump during training aboard USCGC *Myrtle Hazard* (WPC 1139) in the Coral Sea off Papua New Guinea on Aug. 26, 2023.

Commonwealth Zoning Board Hearing



December 07, 2023 | 2:30 PM
Zoning Office Conference Room
Chalan Lauau, Saipan

Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. 670-234-9661/2/3, FAX 234-9666
zoningboard@cnmzoning.com



AGENDA

A. Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call

B. Public Comment

C. Evidentiary Hearing

The Commonwealth Zoning Board will be conducting an Evidentiary Hearing for ABM Auto Repair Shop regarding Notice of Violation #2019-4835. This shop is located on Lot No. E.A. 368 in the village of Chalan Kanoa, within the Village Commercial zoning district.

D. Adjournment

/s/Henry Hofschneider, Chairman



UNITED STATES Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 3rd Quarter General Membership Meeting on December 18, 2023, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm at Kensington Hotel – Queen’s Hall

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Review & Adoption of the Agenda of December 18, 2023
- IV. Review & Adoption of Meeting Minutes of July 31, 2023
- V. New Business
 - a. Office of the Public Auditor Ethic Presentation
 - b. International Day for Persons with Disabilities – December 5, 2023
 - c. Family Transition Symposium – January 2024
 - d. Fundamentals of Caregiving Training
 - e. American Sign Language Training
 - f. March 2024 Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
- VI. Action Item
 - a. Ratify the Approval of the DD Basic Grant Partial Allotment Budget
 - b. Ratify the Approval of the CNMI Assistive Technology Grant Partial Allotment Budget
- VII. Old Business
 - a. AS UCEDD Technical Assistance Update
 - b. CNMI Walkability Action Institute Update
 - c. CNMI Disability Sport Festival Update
 - d. September 2023 – Emergency Preparedness Month Update
- VIII. Reports
 - a. Chairperson
 - b. State Plan Committee Chairperson
 - c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
 - d. Executive Director
- IX. Miscellaneous
- X. Next Meeting
- XI. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes of oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Concepcion Ulloa
Chairperson

This ad is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award total \$274,744 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.



Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950



“ADDENDUM”

Extension of Offeror Question from 12/7/2023 – 01/08/2024

Extension of Submission Date from 12/15/2023 to 01/15/2024

RFP24-CHCC/HIT-EMR/EHR-002A

“COMMONWEALTH HEALTH CENTER CERTIFIED ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT”

Notice to Offerors

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the “Community Health Center Certified Electronic Health Record Implementation Project” (RFP24-CHCC/HIT-EMR/EHR-002) is available on this website: <https://www.chcc.health/RFP/requestforproposal.php>.

Issuer Information

This RFP is issued by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) of the Northern Marianas Islands, 1178 Hinemlu St. Garapan, Saipan MP 96950.

Notice of Intent to Submit a Proposal

Interested offerors must email a “Notice of Intent to Submit a Proposal” to Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) Procurement Director, Cora Ada, at cora.ada@chcc.health as soon as practicable. This notice ensures that all interested parties receive relevant information on RFP updates or questions. While this step is crucial, it does not bind the offeror to make a submission. If an interested offeror fails to submit a notice of intent, they acknowledge and accept the risk of potentially missing crucial information.

All notices of intent to submit a proposal must include the RFP number (RFP24-CHCC/HIT-EMR/EHR-002) and project title, “Community Health Center Certified Electronic Health Record Implementation Project”, in the subject line. The content of the email should state the Offeror organization name, at least one primary email contact, and a brief statement of intent to submit a proposal.

Communication Protocol

Questions about this RFP will only be received in writing via email to CHCC Director of IT, Bel Busby at bel.busby@chcc.health and CHCC Procurement Director, Cora Ada at cora.ada@chcc.health with the RFP number and project title as the subject. Questions communicated verbally may not be answered. Offerors must avoid direct communication about this RFP with other CHCC staff members.

RFP Timeline

- Deadline for Offeror questions is **3:00 P.M. (Chamorro Standard Time), January 8th, 2024.**
- Final proposals must be submitted as docx or pdf attachments via email to Cora.Ada@chcc.health, and must be received by **4:30 P.M. (Chamorro Standard Time), January 15th, 2024.**
- Late proposals won't be accepted.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

White House green slush fund throwing around cash

It's holiday season, and the Biden administration is in full Santa Claus mode. Never mind the \$33 trillion national debt clock whirring upward, the White House is making liberal use of a massive green slush fund to dole out taxpayer-funded goodies to favored special interests.

The comically misnamed Inflation Reduction Act contained \$400 billion to be dispersed as part of President Joe Biden's green industrial policy. That's a fancy phrase for empowering government bureaucrats under crony capitalism to make decisions that should be left to the marketplace.

Much of the cash will be funneled through the Department of Energy's Loan Programs Office. There's no shortage of outstretched hands.

"The agency agreed to a \$1 billion loan for Monolith, a company that promises to make hydrogen out of natural gas," Kimberley Strassel of The Wall Street Journal reports. "Sunnova, a solar company, landed a \$3 billion loan guarantee. Then there are all the real paupers. General Motors and LG scooped up \$2.5 billion to build electric-vehicle battery plants. Ford landed a record \$9.2 billion battery commitment. The Ford loan would be \$3.3 billion larger than what the company borrowed during the Detroit meltdown of 2008-09."

There's more. The Environmental Protection Agency also has billions in taxpayer cash to throw around. "The EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund will be responsible for distributing \$27 billion to nonprofit groups and the green energy technology sector by next September," The Washington Free Beacon reports.

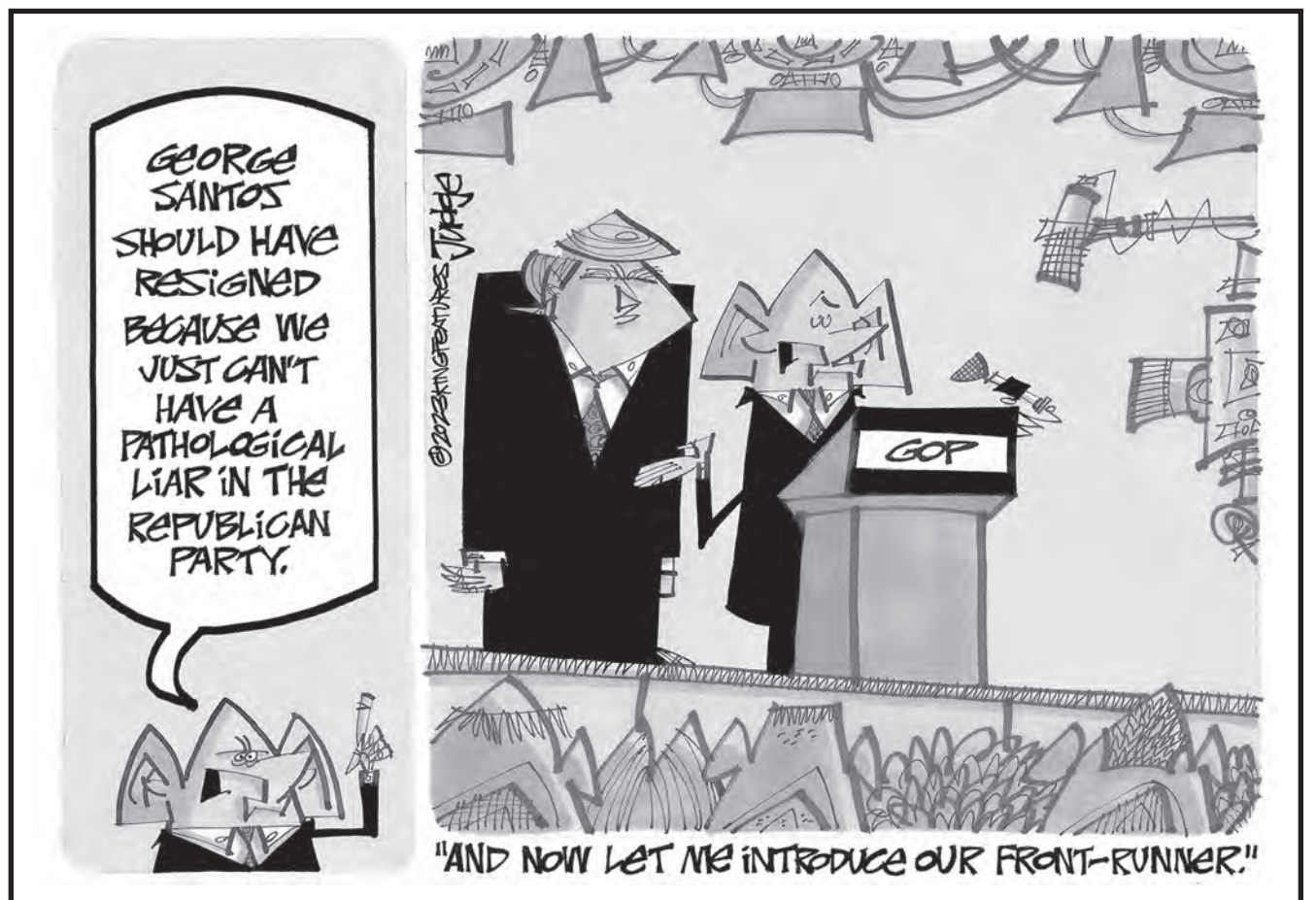
Remember all the waste and fraud that characterized the government's COVID response? The same risks dog the administration's green handouts—and many observers are ringing alarm bells.

The Energy Department's inspector general, Teri L. Donaldson, testified last month before a Senate committee, "The current situation brings tremendous risk to the taxpayers," adding that the accelerated disbursement of funds creates "a real risk of funding entities with foreign ownership or control." In addition, Ms. Donaldson noted, "many of these projects are designed to promote innovation by financing projects not otherwise acceptable by private equity investors—projects the markets do not view as acceptable."

Supporters of green pork argue that such "investments" will pave the way for our brave new energy future. But the idea that state and federal functionaries are capable of manipulating the energy marketplace without deleterious consequences is fiction—as is the notion that the United States can meet all its energy needs over the next few decades solely with renewables.

If ever there were an opportunity for congressional Republicans to highlight the Biden administration's fiscal mismanagement, this is it.

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How to break the cycle of aiding Gaza only to see it destroyed again

By ANDY DWONCH

Los Angeles Times



Andy Dwonch is a 20-year veteran of the international humanitarian aid industry. From 2006 to 2010 and then from 2015 to 2019, he lived in Jerusalem and directed humanitarian efforts in the occupied Palestinian territories for Mercy Corps, a global humanitarian organization. @dwonch

I arrived in Palestine and Israel just months after Hamas' election victory. It was July 2006, and Israel's first Gaza war (with Hamas) and second Lebanon war (with Hezbollah) were just finishing. My wife and I were living in East Jerusalem, where our two kids would learn to walk and over the years form indelible memories in Israel and the occupied West Bank.

The 2006 election, in which just 191,000 Gazans (8.3% of today's population) cast a ballot in favor of Hamas, is often touted as proof that Gaza's population supports terrorism. Lesser known is that exit polling showed that 83% of voters in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem supported peace with Israel, and 75% believed Hamas should change its policy toward Israel. Hardly a vote for radical ideology.

As humanitarian workers, we witnessed Israel's imposition of a complete blockade of Gaza, preventing the free flow of goods and people between the tiny coastal enclave and the outside world. Because of the lack of raw materials and no access to markets beyond its borders, productive industries collapsed and unemployment soared, forcing the population into near-total aid dependency.

Shocked by the election results, the U.S. and Europe followed Israel's lead in boycotting any engagement with a Palestinian Authority that had Hamas in its coalition (2006-07). Seeking to maintain momentum toward building a Palestinian state as part of a two-state solution, the U.S. established a framework for provision of aid through Palestinian civil society organizations, outside the control of the Palestinian Authority, which governs parts of the occupied West Bank. Since 2007, after the collapse of the governing coalition and the Hamas takeover of Gaza, the U.S. has employed that framework in the Strip ever since.

Looking back now, we can see how humanitarian aid, as well-intentioned as it seemed, served as a wedge against Hamas, and ironically enabled Israel to shirk its obligations under international humanitarian law to provide for the needs of the occupied population.

Nongovernmental organizations like mine, rushed into the political vacuum to buffer Gaza's civilians from the economic repercussions of Israel's siege. In late 2006, our first humanitarian projects offered cash for work to help keep families afloat. With limited materials, Gazan work crews were often tasked with cleaning public spaces using brooms to push litter into piles along the curb. With no functioning municipal services to collect the piles, wind would scatter them overnight, for workers to repeat the task the following day. If our programs were Sisyphean, at least they provided reliable cash in pockets. Workers could collect \$250 for 20 days of work, allowing their families to subsist just above the 2006 poverty line.

Over the years, our humanitarian initiatives became more innovative. We built a water desalination system for 50,000 residents, and we helped thousands of youth to develop leadership and community engagement expertise, learn coding and design and gain essential skills to build their careers as remote workers in the global technology economy. Hamas authorities were not supportive and their security officials harassed, intimidated and even detained our staff and program participants to stifle these programs. Stringent "no-contact" policies from our international funders prohibiting engagement with Hamas authorities left few options for us to protect our people beyond trying to operate under the radar.

Cross-border violence every few years also spiked into more significant conflicts which disproportionately harmed Gazans. For example, in 2008-09, 1,385 Gazans and four Israelis were killed; and in 2014, 2,251 Gazans and 39 Israelis were killed. Israel vowed in each of these wars to eliminate Hamas' military capacity, and each time, despite Israel's vast military advantage, they failed.

Each time Gaza's civilians suffered brutal loss of life, property, livelihoods and mass traumatization. And each time the international humanitarian community was called on to pick up the pieces. Israel, which under international humanitarian law should provide for the well-being and protection of people in the territories it occupies, instead consistently imposed enigmatic systems severely limiting humanitarian access and inhibiting reconstruction efforts.

It was so difficult to secure construction materials through legitimate means that Hamas was able to build a thriving black market economy for importation of goods through tunnels, which were run in plain sight, from Egypt. Hamas leaders not only got fabulously rich but were able to build up a vast arsenal of weaponry as well. Israel did little to curtail this, while insisting its blockade of the Strip was working to ensure their security.

The Oct. 7 atrocities are just the latest proof that Israel's Gaza strategy of blockade and "mowing the grass" has failed horribly.

See HOW on Page 9

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Covering Kissinger's century

President Richard Nixon was work-vacationing in his Western White House estate at San Clemente and not far away, the White House press corps was about to be briefed by the world's most famous anonymous authority on all foreign policies.

Which is to say, another ritual Vietnam War policy/press corps kabuki was about to start.

It began the usual way, with Nixon press secretary Ronald Ziegler saying National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger was about to explain a significant new development in the Vietnam War—and that this would be a “background” briefing in which this most famous and influential official could only be identified in news stories as an anonymous “senior administration official.”

Next, as usual, some reporter asked why the briefer couldn't be properly identified. Just because, Ziegler elaborated. We could either abide by the ground rules or we could leave.

At that point, Newsday's young Washington bureau chief saw something and spoke up. (Yep, me.) I noted that among the dozens of journalists in the room were correspondents from Tass and Izvestia, the Soviet Union's government-run news organizations. And I asked: Is it now the Nixon White House's policy that the Soviet Union's top officials can know the identity of America's wartime policy explainer—but it must be kept secret from America's citizens?

Ziegler leaned toward Kissinger. Whispering commenced. Then Ziegler announced their decision: The rule is the rule. I must abide by it or I must leave before the briefing begins.

Well, I was about to pack up and go—and others seemed ready too. But then I noticed something—and stopped. I said I'd abide by their rule. Some of my colleagues looked

surprised; but they too chose to stay.

My Newsday article the next morning reported a new policy and explained to readers that, according to the White House's ground rules, the details could only be attributed to an anonymous senior administration official. The next sentence reported the policy had been announced at a briefing attended by dozens of correspondents, including reporters from Tass and Izvestia—plus one private citizen: David Kissinger, teenage son of Dr. Henry Kissinger, the national security adviser to the president of the United States of America.

The next morning, as I headed out to our motorcade buses, Dr. Kissinger walked up and, in the deep rumble of his morning voice, he said: “Well, I saw your article this morning, Marty.” (In those days that took considerable effort; Newsday's newspapers were all in New York; we were in California; the Internet was decades ahead of us all.)

I said that he must have been impressed by how meticulously I followed his ground rules. “Very funny,” he replied. His famously guttural diplo-voice never hinted whether he really meant it; but what he did next surely did. He already had in his hand the hotel room key he'd forgotten to turn in—and he presented it to me as if he was awarding an Oscar.

“A trophy for your wall,” he said, as his mouth worked at suppressing what could have become a grin. And being caught grinning with me wouldn't do at all. After all, his boss infamously banned me and Newsday from his historic, era-opening trip to China as payback for a Newsday series I worked on about Nixon, his Key Biscayne, Florida, banker friend Charles (Bebe) Rebozo, and their finances. And there were all those Watergate revelation pieces our Newsday Washington bureau had done.

By **MARTIN SCHRAM**

Tribune News Service



Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com

By now you have read and heard the news that Dr. Henry Kissinger died Wednesday at age 100. He had been sharp and willing to advise until the very end. In July, Kissinger traveled to Beijing and met with President Xi Jinping. The Chinese called him a “double centurion” because the 100-year-old Kissinger had visited China more than 100 times.

Kissinger has been praised and vilified for policies he had championed—and sometimes cloaked in secrecy, during a career that extended from the coldest of the Cold War to the tumult of whatever we choose to call today's era. He designed and promoted Nixon's Vietnam War secrecies—including America's covert bombings of Cambodia and Laos—and the coup that replaced Chile's Marxist President Salvador Allende with the dictator Augusto Pinochet.

He always had a remarkable way with words. I remember one small session in his White House office when another reporter asked a perfectly fair, but gotcha-like question (Dr. Kissinger, you recently said such-and-such). Kissinger nodded and dryly noted: “Not only did I say it, but it had the added virtue of being true.”

At his best and all the rest, Henry Kissinger was more than unique. He always knew where he stood, with whomever he was with.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A master plan or the scatterbrained approach

The governor is struggling to repair the catastrophic damage to our economy, but the reforms and synergy needed to create a booming economy has yet to materialize. Why does the governor have to plead with CPA to focus on promoting airlines to return to the CNMI? I'm sure it's the politics of CPA that conflicts with the governor. The Japanese people, their government, and airlines are being negatively influenced by CPA's public efforts with their cries for China—it's counterproductive to the governor's goal!

I was trying back in the mid-2000s to warn our leaders that our World War II tourism model was becoming outdated due to the aging Japanese tourist market with an interest in World War II and the beginning of Chinese tourists in the CNMI.

The Japanese actually telegraphed to us their distaste when Japan Airlines pulled out in 2005 without any warning, in part due to Chinese traveling in numbers to the CNMI as tourists. Heck, I also warned our leaders in 2001 that the garment industry was leaving and, just like Japan Airlines, the garment industry left in the middle of the night without warning on Dec. 31, 2005.

When will our leaders get it that China is the source of our economic woes? We are caught in a cultural conflict between China and Japan and these two critical incidents could have been addressed, avoiding damage to our economy years in advance. But it proved to me that too many of our leaders don't care when they refuse to listen, driven by political jealousy, bigotry, and even vengeance that has only served to harm the CNMI.

Where is the master plan for our economic recovery? Because what I see is a scatterbrained approach to our recovery. CPA is pushing for China when the governor wants them to focus on Japan. The Casino Commission is stringing things out just to keep their jobs when we need an expeditious resolution—the CC should have filed suit for the entire \$ 141 million owed the government and people, so we can move

forward with the new. Heck, didn't we learn from the same thing with the casino commissioners on Rota who were paid for years when there was no casino? Everything IPI owns except for the buildings and stocks is up for sale but not so much as a whisper about our \$77 million because Ambrose M. Bennett is the only one screaming murder about this intentional oversight by the CC. So what does that tell citizens who need to wake up and help me!

PSS, NMC, and NMTI are doing their very best to transform our workforce but they are barely scratching the surface when it comes to building a real case to present to the feds in 2029 for keeping some CWs. It's a scatterbrained approach and it's not their fault.

Our leaders and the average citizen know that we need new investors that will bring new revenue sources, yet no one in government has lifted a finger to directly address this need for new investors. The late CNMI founder, Eddie Pangelinan, once told me that when the U.S. Senate rejected the request of the CNMI to become a Commonwealth, the founders sought out every U.S. senator and convinced them to approve the Commonwealth. We must do the same thing—seek out investors if we truly want to attract new investors, especially when we don't have a new tourism model to promote. In fact, what is our intended tourism model now or are we still only focusing on the WWII model that has expired? What kind of investors are we trying to attract? Heck, what is our master plan for rebuilding our tourism? The MVA can't do it alone nor can our governor when there are so many scatterbrained efforts that conflict with the vision he has for rebuilding our tourism industry. We the people and the governor need all the stakeholders to buy into the governor's plans, just like they did when we first created our tourism industry—if we are to create real reforms with synergy in our quest for prosperity.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman III, Saipan

HOW

From page 8

Many fear Israel's strategy was actually serving ulterior motives: the ethnic cleansing of the land between the river and the sea of its Palestinian population.

It's not hard to see why. In Israel's latest war on Gaza, 15,000 Gazans have been killed, more than 40% of whom are children. The scale of destruction of property and infrastructure is unprecedented, causing doubts there will be anything to go back home to when the conflict finally ends.

Not only has the U.S. bankrolled Israel's warmaking, but based on the decades-long precedent of the international community subsidizing the cost of Israel's occupation, Israel will no doubt expect the United States and international community to shoulder the cost of post-war humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Gaza as well.

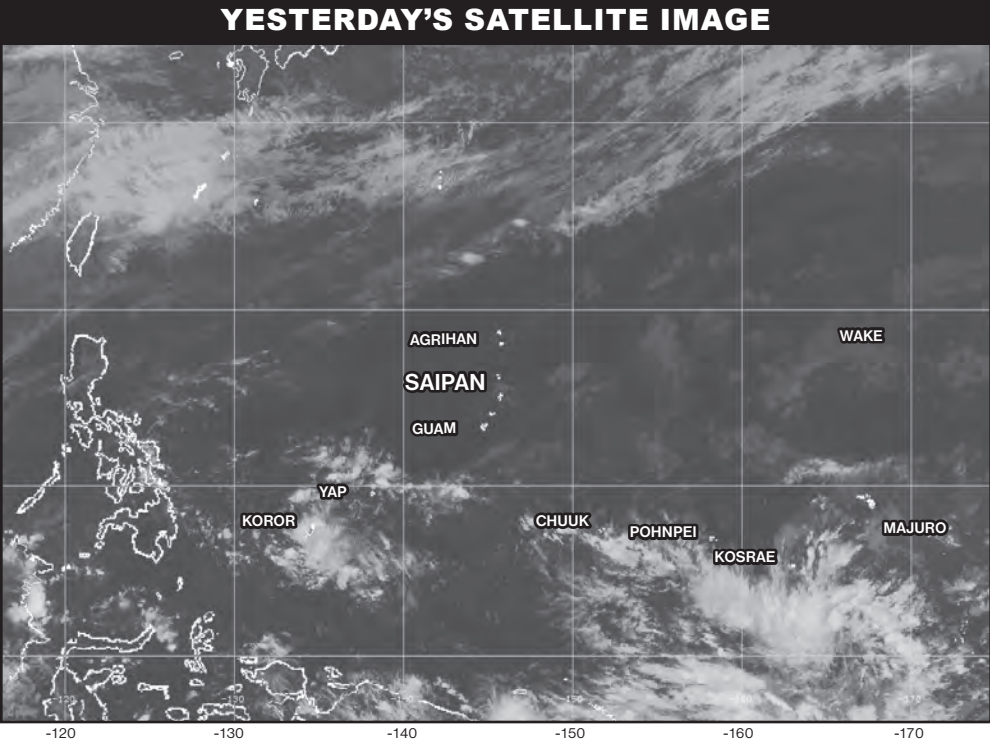
Extremist groups in both Israel and Palestine will continue to undermine any prospects for peace. We can no longer wait for dysfunctional governments and bad actors to negotiate in good faith. Western officials have long insisted that we shouldn't meddle in the internal affairs of Israel and the Palestinians. But given the vast investments made over generations, and those that will be required next—to just stabilize the region—these can no longer be considered “internal” affairs.

After this war, there can be no going back to the old models. Post war, the international community must be fully empowered with unfettered access and ability to operate freely in leading the recovery and rebuilding of lives.

President Joe Biden's first steps in this new reality should be to completely change course. He must condition future aid on Israel ending its siege of Gaza and military occupation of the West Bank. A brighter future for both Israelis and Palestinians must be rooted in safety, dignity and human rights for all people, and there can be no progress toward these ideals in the context of military occupation. This moment has created an opening to break from this brutal cycle of violence. We must only be brave enough to seize this opportunity to bring about a radical change of direction.

The Weather

| 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|--|-----|--|-----|
| TODAY | | WEDNESDAY | | THURSDAY | | FRIDAY | | SATURDAY | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph. | | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph. | | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph. | | Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers. | | Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers. | |
| 87 | 78° | 87 | 78° | 87 | 78° | 87 | 78° | 87 | 78° |



Satellite indicating partly cloudy skies and isolated showers over the Marianas. A slight uptick in showers and clouds is approaching the Tinian and Saipan coastal waters. Latest buoy and altimetry data are showing seas of 5 to 8 feet. Winds are moderate to fresh from the east.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

| MICRONESIA | | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------|--------|
| Guam and Rota | Partly Cloudy | 88° / 81° | |
| Palau | Cloudy | 84° / 79° | |
| Yap | Mostly Cloudy | 87° / 81° | |
| Chuuk | Cloudy | 89° / 80° | |
| Pohnpei | Mostly Cloudy | 89° / 80° | |
| Kosrae | Showers | 86° / 79° | |
| Majuro | Mostly Cloudy/Wind | 85° / 79° | |

| DAY | SUNRISE | SUNSET |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| Today | 6:29 AM | 5:45 PM |
| Wednesday | 6:29 AM | 5:45 PM |
| Thursday | 6:30 AM | 5:46 PM |
| Friday | 6:30 AM | 5:46 PM |
| Saturday | 6:31 AM | 5:46 PM |

| DAY | MOONRISE | MOONSET | MOONRISE |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Today | - | 12:29 PM | - |
| Wednesday | 12:29 AM | 1:03 PM | - |
| Thursday | 1:15 AM | 1:35 PM | - |
| Friday | 2:01 AM | 2:09 PM | - |
| Saturday | 2:49 AM | 2:45 PM | - |

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| FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023 | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|---------|----------------------|----------------------|---------|----------|------------------------|
| DEPARTURES | | | | ARRIVALS | | | |
| SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) | | | | GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN | | | |
| UA076 | 9:50AM | 10:30AM | Daily | UA174 | 8:00AM | 8:45AM | Daily |
| SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT) | | | | NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN | | | |
| UA824 | 7:05AM | 9:45AM | 1, 3, 5 | UA825 | 9:25PM | 2:00AM+1 | 2, 4, 7 |
| GUAM-MANILA (MNL) | | | | MANILA (MNL)-GUAM | | | |
| PR 111 | 5:55AM | 7:55AM | Daily | UA189 | 00:40AM | 6:30AM | 3, 6 |
| UA193 | 7:50PM | 11:50PM | 2, 5 via Palau | PR110 | 10:05PM | 3:55AM+1 | Daily |
| UA183 | 7:55PM | 9:50PM | Daily | UA192 | 10:40PM | 6:30AM+1 | 2, 5 via Palau |
| | | | | UA184 | 10:55PM | 4:45AM+1 | 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 |
| SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) | | | | MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN | | | |
| 7C3403/2305 | 4:40AM | 10:20PM | Daily | UA189/174 | 00:40AM | 8:45AM+1 | 3, 6 via Guam |
| UA076/183 | 9:50AM | 9:50PM | Daily via Guam | UA192/174 | 10:40PM | 8:45AM+1 | 2, 5 via Palau, Guam |
| UA076/193 | 9:50AM | 11:50PM | 2, 5 via Guam, Palau | UA184/174 | 10:55PM | 8:45AM+1 | 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam |
| | | | | 7C2306/3406 | 11:15PM | 3:30PM+1 | Daily |
| SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN) | | | | INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN | | | |
| TW308 | 2:15AM | 6:10AM | Daily | 7C3406 | 10:10AM | 3:30PM | Daily |
| 7C3403 | 4:40AM | 8:35AM | Daily | TW307 | 7:45PM | 1:15AM+1 | Daily |
| 7C3405 | 4:35PM | 8:25PM | Daily | 7C3404 | 10:15PM | 3:35AM+1 | Daily |
| LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. <i>(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)</i> | | | | | | | |

| STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC. | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|-------------------|
| FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023 | | | | | |
| SAIPAN TO ROTA | | | | | |
| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
| 1301 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 08:30 | 09:00 | Oct 21-31, 2023 |
| 1302 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 10:30 | 11:00 | Daily |
| 1303 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 15:30 | 16:00 | Daily |
| ROTA TO SAIPAN | | | | | |
| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
| 3101 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 9:30 | 10:00 | Oct 21-31, 2023 |
| 3102 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 11:30 | 12:00 | Saturday & Sunday |
| 3103 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 13:30 | 14:00 | Monday To Friday |
| 3104 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 16:30 | 17:00 | Daily |
| ROTA TO GUAM | | | | | |
| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
| 3401 | ROTA | GUAM | 11:30 | 12:00 | Monday To Friday |
| GUAM TO ROTA | | | | | |
| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
| 4301 | GUAM | ROTA | 12:30 | 13:00 | Monday To Friday |
| SAIPAN TO TINIAN | | | | | |
| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
| 1201 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 7:30 | 7:45 | Daily |
| 1202 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 1203 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 9:00 | 9:15 | Daily |
| 1204 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 10:00 | 10:15 | Daily |
| 1206 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 15:00 | 15:15 | Daily |
| 1207 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 16:00 | 16:15 | Daily |
| 1208 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 17:00 | 17:15 | Daily |
| TINIAN TO SAIPAN | | | | | |
| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
| 2101 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 2102 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 8:30 | 8:45 | Daily |
| 2103 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 9:30 | 9:45 | Daily |
| 2104 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 10:30 | 10:45 | Daily |
| 2106 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 15:30 | 15:45 | Daily |
| 2107 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 16:30 | 16:45 | Daily |
| 2108 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 17:30 | 17:45 | Daily |

Business

Fork & Spoon is also now home for desserts

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

For the longest time Fork & Spoon: House of Sizzling's claim to fame is its sizzling meals served in a hot plate.

But lately the Middle Road restaurant has become well known also for its unique desserts inspired by Filipino goodies like brazo de mercedes cuppies and yema cake and the French crème brulee.

The former is a type of rolled cake made from a sheet of soft meringue with custard filling, but Fork & Spoon added a little twist by making it into cupcakes.

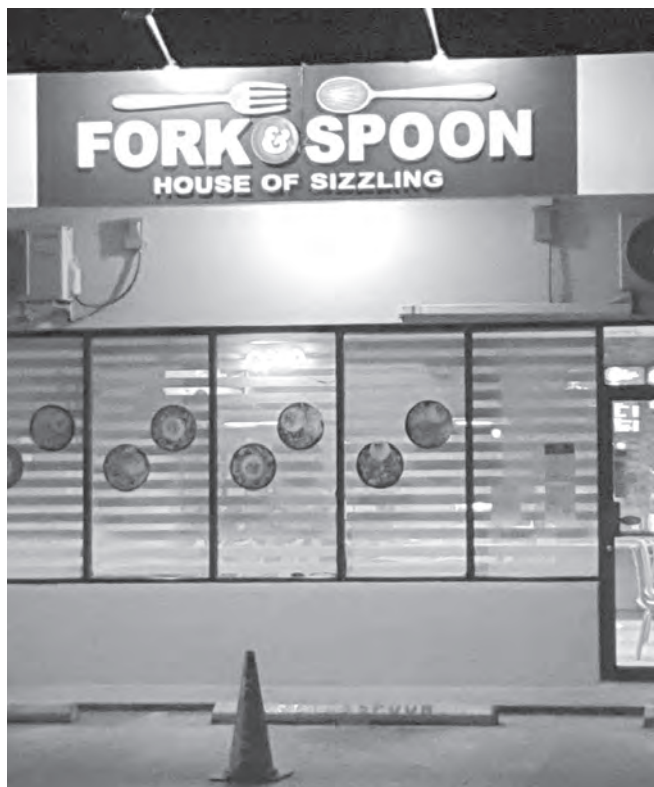
Yema cake, meanwhile, is basically yema, which is a sweet custard confectionery from the Philippines, made into a cake.

Crème brulee, which Fork & Spoon just introduced last month, is a French dessert now exceedingly popular in the Philippines consisting of a rich custard base topped with a layer of hardened caramelized sugar.

Owner Joan Bonggaling, who is in her last year at NMTECH's culinary arts program, said Fork & Spoon's desserts had their origins from the actual desserts her family served their guests during gatherings at home.

Unlike other brazo de mercedes, yema cake, and crème brulee desserts in the market, Fork & Spoon's versions of the old favorites are not exceedingly sweet and have maintained their home-made creaminess.

Fork & Spoon's brazo de



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fork & Spoon: House of Sizzling is located at Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai.

mercedes cuppies cost \$2.99 apiece, while the yema cake and creme brulee are \$3.99 each.

Currently, Fork & Spoon is offering a 10% discount on diners' total bill for a party of six or more. The restaurant is also a member of the NMC Proa Perks program and cardholders will get unlimited iced tea and miso soup. Same goes for Take Care Insurance members.

Bonggaling also said their Holiday Special packages have become so popular that only the \$119.99 Set A package is left for preorder.

The aforementioned Holiday Special package includes glazed ham (8 lbs), macaroni salad (1 lb), coffee jelly (1 lb), and dinner roll, and 50z ham sauce.

Bonggaling said she stopped the preorders for the \$169.99 Set B and the \$249.99 Set C packages—both headlined by Fork & Spoon's ever so popular lechon belly—because she doesn't want to compromise the quality of their food in exchange for more profit.

Lately, Fork & Spoon has also gained a following on Tinian with Bonggaling sharing that they've been receiving orders from the neighboring island (of course lechon belly has been one of the favorites) and they manage to ship the food items via Star Marianas Air.

Located at Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai, Fork & Spoon is open Monday to Saturday from 11am to 8pm and Sunday from 10am to 2pm. For more information call (670) 235-5626 and look them up on Facebook and Instagram, @forkandspoon.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fork & Spoon's crème brulee.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fork & Spoon's brazo de mercedes cuppies.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fork & Spoon's yema cake.

Nation

Dems in Senate demand Israel limit civilian deaths

WASHINGTON (AP)—As a cease-fire ticked down last week and Israel prepared to resume its round-the-clock airstrikes, Sen. Bernie Sanders and a robust group of Democratic senators had a message for their president: They were done “asking nicely” for Israel to do more to reduce civilian casualties in Gaza.

Lawmakers warned President Joe Biden's national security team that planned U.S. aid to Israel must be met with assurances of concrete steps from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-right government.

“The truth is that if asking nicely worked, we wouldn't be in the position we are today,” Sanders of Vermont said in a floor speech. It was time for the United States to use its “substantial leverage” with its ally, Sanders said.

“And we all know what that leverage is,” he said, adding, “the blank-check approach must end.”

With Biden's request for a nearly \$106 billion aid

package for Ukraine, Israel and other national security needs hanging in the balance, the senators' tougher line on Israel has gotten the White House's attention, and that of Israel.

Lawmakers of both parties for decades have embraced the U.S. role as Israel's top protector, and it's all but inconceivable that they would vote down the wartime aid. The Democratic lawmakers are adamant that's not their intent, as strong supporters of Israel's right of self-defense against Hamas. But just the fact that pressure is building—including from mainstream lawmakers, supporters of the Democratic president—shows the fractures in Congress as the aid debate drags on.

Sanders and the Democratic senators involved say they are firm in their stand that Israel's military must adopt substantive measures to lessen civilian deaths in Gaza as part of receiving the supplemental's \$14.3 billion in U.S. aid for Israel's war.

The warning from friendly Democrats is a complication for the White House as it faces what had already been a challenging task of getting the supplemental aid bill through Congress. Some Republicans are balking at the part of the bill that provides funding for Ukraine's war against Russia, and the funding for Israel was supposed to be the easy part.

The demand is a warning of more trouble ahead for an Israeli government that's often at odds with the U.S. in its treatment of Palestinians.

“There's a big difference between asking and getting a commitment” from Netanyahu's government on a plan to reduce civilian casualties and improve living conditions in Gaza, Maryland Democratic Sen. Chris Van Hollen told The Associated Press. Van Hollen has been one of the key senators huddling with administration officials on the demands.

“So our goal is to achieve results,” Van Hollen said. “And not just set expectations.”

GOP had New Yorkers lead the way in expelling Santos

WASHINGTON (AP)—George Santos is gone from the House, but his name is certain to pop up in key congressional races across New York next year. Democrats are targeting five seats held by first-term Republicans and looking to associate them with their former colleague in the state's congressional delegation as often as they can.

How successful Democrats are in that effort could help determine which party holds the majority in the House in 2025.

The strategy of association was evident as Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said, “New York castigated Republicans in comments leading up to Santos' expulsion on Friday. “Look, House Republicans knew a lot about George Santos before he was elected. And we have reason to believe either intentionally kept that information out of the public domain or willfully turned a blind eye,” Jeffries said. “And then, when the information exploded into the public domain, continue to coddle George Santos and play footsie with him for the better part of the year.”

The concern about Santos possibly tainting other Republican members' standing with voters was evident as New Yorkers made themselves front and center in the drive to expel Santos.

Rep. Anthony D'Esposito, a Republican whose district borders Santos' district, offered the expulsion legislation so that it had to be acted on within two days, even though it had been authored by a Mississippi lawmaker, GOP Rep. Michael Guest, chairman of the House Ethics Committee.

Those watching D'Esposito read the resolution on television saw Rep. Nick LaLota sitting to his left and Rep. Mike Lawler sitting directly behind him. Both are first-term lawmakers from New York whose districts favored Democrat Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election. Biden carried D'Esposito's district by more than 14 percentage points.

D'Esposito also led the debate for proponents of expulsion when the resolution reached the House floor. Santos led the debate for those arguing against the resolution. LaLota and Lawler also spoke, as did Rep. Marc Molinaro, another New York Republican who at one point grew exasperated as con-

cerns were raised about the House setting a precedent of expelling members before they had their day in court.

“Dear God, Mr. Speaker, my future former colleague is divorced from reality,” Molinaro said. “He has manufactured his entire life to defraud the voters of his district of an honest choice for a member of Congress.”

Santos won his Long Island-based district with 54% of the vote, flipping a seat that had been held by the Democrats. But soon after, reports began to emerge that Santos had lied about having Jewish ancestry, a career at top Wall Street firms and a college degree. He turned into a distraction and an embarrassment to his party. Then came federal charges and the highly critical report from the House Ethics Committee. Santos has pleaded not guilty.

In an adjoining district, D'Esposito won with 52% of the vote, Lawler won a suburban district just north of New York City with 50% of the vote. Also able to generate close victories were Molinaro with 51% and Brandon Williams, also with, 51%.

Asia

11 bodies recovered following volcanic eruption in Indonesia

PADANG, Indonesia (AP)—The bodies of 11 climbers were recovered Monday a day after a furious eruption of the Mount Marapi volcano as Indonesian rescuers searched for 12 apparently still missing.

Marapi has stayed at the third highest of four alert levels since 2011, a level indicating above normal volcanic activity and prohibiting climbers or villagers within 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) of the peak, said Hendra Gunawan, the head of the Center for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation.

“This means that there should be no climbing to the peak,” Gunawan said, adding that climbers were only allowed below the danger zone, “but sometimes many of them broke the rules to fulfill their satisfaction to climb further.”

About 75 climbers had started their way up the nearly 2,900-meter (9,480-foot) mountain on Saturday and became stranded. Eight of those rescued Sunday were rushed to hospitals with burns and one also had a broken limb, said Hari Agustian, an official at the local Search and Rescue

Agency in Padang, the West Sumatra provincial capital.

All of the climbers had registered at two command posts or online through West Sumatra’s conservation agency before they climbed, Agustian said. It was possible others took illegal roads or local residents were active in the area, but it couldn’t be confirmed, he said.

Marapi spewed thick columns of ash as high as 3,000 meters (9,800 feet) in Sunday’s eruption and hot ash clouds spread several miles (kilometers). Nearby villages and towns were blanketed by tons of volcanic debris. Volcanic dust and rain smeared the faces and hair of evacuated climbers, according to video on social media.

Falling ash blanketed several villages and blocked sunlight, and authorities distributed masks and urged residents to wear eyeglasses to protect them from volcanic ash. About 1,400 people live on Marapi’s slopes in Rubai and Gobah Cumantiang, the nearest villages about 5 to 6 kilometers (3.1 to 3.7 miles) from the peak.

Gunawan said that Sunday’s eruption was not preceded by a significant increase in volcanic earthquakes. Deep volcanic earthquakes were only recorded three times between Nov. 16 and on Sunday, while the deformation equipment or tiltmeter on the peak showed a horizontal pattern on the radial axis and a slight inflation on the tangential axis.

“This shows that the eruption process is taking place quickly and the center of pressure is very shallow, around the peak,” he said.

Marapi has been observed regularly erupting since 2004 with a gap of 2 to 4 years, Gunawan said.

“Marapi eruptions are always sudden and difficult to detect using equipment because the source is near the surface,” Gunawan said, “This eruption was not caused by the movement of magma.”

West Sumatra’s Search and Rescue Agency head Abdul Malik said rescuers found 11 bodies of climbers as they searched for those who still missing and rescued three others Monday morning.

air patrols with the United States late last month.

Strong quake that sparked tsunami warning leaves 1 dead amid widespread panic in PH

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A powerful earthquake that shook the southern Philippines killed at least one villager and injured several others as thousands scrambled out of their homes in panic and jammed roads to higher grounds after a tsunami warning was issued, officials said Sunday. The U.S. Geological Survey reported that the quake Saturday night had a magnitude of 7.6 and struck at a depth of 32 kilometers (20 miles). The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said it expected tsunami waves to hit the southern Philippines and parts of Indonesia, Palau and Malaysia, but later dropped its tsunami warning. The USGS recorded further earthquakes Sunday with magnitudes of 6.6 and 6.9 but but there were no tsunami alerts. In Japan, authorities issued evacuation orders late Saturday in various parts of Okinawa prefecture, including for the entire coastal area, affecting thousands of

people. A pregnant woman died after she, her husband and daughter were hit by a 15-foot (4.5-meter) concrete wall that collapsed in their neighborhood as the ground shook and prompted them to flee from their house in Tagum city in Davao del Norte province, the city’s disaster-mitigation chief, Sheldon Isidoro, told The Associated Press. Her husband and daughter were injured. Two other children and their parents jumped from a second-floor window in panic as their house swayed but were not injured after landing on a grassy lot, said Isidoro, who was at his home when the ground started to shake. “Initially the swaying was weak. Then it quickly became stronger and I could hardly stand. My perfume bottles fell off a table, pictures on my wall swung and I heard people screaming outside: ‘Get out, get out, earthquake, earthquake!’” Isidoro said. While he feared the roof of his house would collapse on him, Isidoro said he was more worried that there could be many casualties in Tagum, a city of about 300,000 people, where he had led regular earthquake drills that he thought helped prevent more deaths and injuries.

World

Israel expands ground offensive



AP
Palestinians inspect a damaged building following Israeli airstrikes on the town of Khan Younis, Gaza, Sunday, Dec. 3, 2023.

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP)—Israel’s ground offensive expanded to every part of the Gaza Strip, its military said Sunday, as it ordered more evacuations and vowed to hit south Gaza with “no less strength” than the fight

» Vows to hit south Gaza with ‘no less strength’ than the north

that has reduced large parts of north Gaza to a moonscape.

Heavy bombardment followed the evacuation orders, and Palestinians in the sealed-off territory bordering Israel and Egypt said they were running out of places to go.

Many of Gaza’s 2.3 million people fled to the south after Israel ordered civilians to leave the north in the early days of the war, which was sparked by the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack in Israel that killed about 1,200, mostly civilians.

After dark, gunfire and shelling were heard in the central town of Deir al-Balah

as flares lit the sky. Israeli drones buzzed overhead in Gaza’s second-largest city, Khan Younis. U.N. human rights chief Volker Türk urged an end to the war, saying civilian suffering was “too much to bear.”

Residents said the military dropped leaflets calling Khan Younis “a dangerous combat zone” and ordering them to move to the border city of Rafah or a coastal area in the southwest.

Halima Abdel-Rahman, a widow and mother of four, said she’s stopped heeding such orders. She fled her home in October to an area outside Khan Younis, where she stays with relatives.

“The occupation tells you to go to this area, then they bomb it,” she said by phone. “The reality is that no place is safe in Gaza. They kill people in the north. They

kill people in the south.”

The Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said the death toll in the territory since Oct. 7 has surpassed 15,500, with more than 41,000 wounded. The ministry does not differentiate between civilian and combatant deaths, but said 70% of the dead were women and children.

A Health Ministry spokesman asserted that hundreds had been killed or wounded since a weeklong cease-fire ended Friday. “The majority of victims are still under the rubble,” Ashraf al-Qidra said.

Ballistic missiles fired by Yemen’s Houthi rebels struck three commercial ships in the Red Sea on Sunday, the latest in a series of maritime attacks in the Mideast linked to the war. The Iranian-backed Houthis claimed two of the attacks. A U.S. warship also shot down three drones in self-defense during the hourslong assault, the U.S. military said.

3 commercial ships hit by missiles in Houthi attack in the Red Sea

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Ballistic missiles fired by Yemen’s Houthi rebels struck three commercial ships Sunday in the Red Sea, while a U.S. warship shot down three drones in self-defense during the hourslong assault, the U.S. military said. The Iranian-backed Houthis claimed two of the attacks.

The strikes marked an escalation in a series of maritime attacks in the Mideast linked to the Israel-Hamas war, as multiple vessels found themselves in the crosshairs of a single Houthi assault for the first time in the conflict. The U.S. vowed to “consider all appropriate responses” in the wake of the attack, specifically calling out Iran, after tensions have been high for years

now over Tehran’s rapidly advancing nuclear program.

“These attacks represent a direct threat to international commerce and maritime security,” the U.S. military’s Central Command said in a statement. “They have jeopardized the lives of international crews representing multiple countries around the world.” It added: “We also have every reason to believe that these attacks, while launched by the Houthis in Yemen, are fully enabled by Iran.”

The attack began around 9:15 a.m. local time (0615 GMT) in Houthi-controlled Sanaa, Yemen’s capital, Central Command said.

The USS Carney, a Navy destroyer, detected a ballistic missile fired from Houthi-

controlled areas of Yemen at the Bahamas-flagged bulk carrier Unity Explorer. The missile hit near the ship, the U.S. said. Shortly afterward, the Carney shot down a drone headed its way, although it’s not clear if the destroyer was the target, Central Command said.

About 30 minutes later, the Unity Explorer was hit by a missile. While responding to its distress call, the Carney shot down another incoming drone. Central Command said the Unity Explorer sustained minor damage from the missile.

Two other commercial ships, the Panamanian-flagged bulk carriers Number 9 and Sophie II, were both struck by missiles. The Number 9 reported some damage but no casualties, and the Sophie II reported no significant damage, Central Command said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

China says US Navy ship ‘illegally intruded’ into waters in South China Sea

BEIJING (AP)—The Chinese military said that an American naval ship had “illegally intruded” on Monday into waters near the Second Thomas Shoal, the site of a hot territorial dispute between China and the Philippines in the South China Sea. A Chinese naval force was mobilized to track the USS *Gabrielle Giffords* during the operation, according to a statement from the People’s Liberation Army Southern Theater. The U.S. Navy did not respond immediately to a request for comment. Chinese and Philippine naval and coast guard ships have confronted each other repeatedly around the Second Thomas Shoal in recent months as China tries to prevent the Philippines from resupplying and repairing a rusting warship that it intentionally ran aground in 1999 to serve as a military outpost. Dwarfed by China’s military might, the Philippines has sought America’s help, agreeing to an expansion of the U.S. military presence in the country earlier this year and launching joint sea and

Overdrive

After nearly two decades, Toyota redesigns the Tacoma for 2024

TOYOTA
The 2024 Toyota Tacoma TRD PreRunner offers a 2.4-liter turbocharged, 4-cylinder engine.



NUTS & BOLTS

- **MSRP:** \$38,100
- **Engine:** 2.4-liter turbocharged 4-cylinder engine
- **Horsepower/Torque:** 278/317 pound-feet
- **EPA fuel economy (city/highway):** 20 mpg city/24 mpg highway
- **Fuel required:** 87 Octane
- **Length/Width/Height:** 213/77.9/74 inches
- **Ground clearance:** 11.5 inches
- **Payload:** 1,460 pounds
- **Towing capacity:** 6,500 pounds

By **LARRY PRINTZ**
Tribune News Service

It finally happened, although it seemed like it never would have. Toyota finally redesigned its midsize pickup truck, the Toyota Tacoma, for the 2024 model year.

Of course, you can't blame Toyota for milking every bit of profit out of the old truck. After all, it has long dominated its market segment, selling more than two-and-a-half times as many pickups as its closest rival in 2022, the Chevrolet Colorado. Yet given the sheer number of new midsize pickup truck rivals, the Tacoma was long overdue for a makeover, as Toyota had not redesigned it in nearly two decades.

Thankfully, for 2024, the Toyota Tacoma is all-new. Built using the TNGA-F global truck platform, its high-strength boxed, steel-ladder frame also underpins the all-new Toyota Tundra, Sequoia and Land Cruiser. Designed at Toyota's CALTY Design Research Center in California and engineered at Toyota's Ann Arbor, Michigan, office, the 2024 Toyota Tacoma comes in Xtra Cab and Double Cab configurations with either a five- or six-foot bed. Trim levels start with the SR grade and rise through SR5, TRD PreRunner, TRD Sport, TRD Off-Road, Limited, TRD Pro, and Trailhunter trims.

The truck's overall shape is a deft imitation of the larger Toyota Tundra while retaining its classic Tacoma grille. Off-road models have up to 11.5 inches of ground clearance as well as flared fenders and all-terrain tires. And it's about two inches taller than before.

Thankfully, Toyota also had the chance to address a key complaint about the current Tacoma: its driving position. The current 2023 model feels as if you're sitting on the floor. That's changed for 2024, with a far more ergonomically pleasing seating position and a generously sized first row. When it comes to the second row, you'll be dependent on the kindness of those in front for sufficient legroom. But the rear seat now boasts three times the amount of storage found in the 2023 Tacoma.

Otherwise, interior ambience will feel familiar. As you

might expect, the instrument panel is centered around a new standard 8-inch infotainment touchscreen; a larger 14-inch touchscreen is optional. Both run Toyota's new user interface, which is far more intuitive to use than before. Yes, there are USB-C ports up front. Wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are standard. Uniquely, the front center audio system speaker is removable, becoming a portable Bluetooth speaker. Finally, a 7-inch digital instrument cluster comes standard, a 12.3-inch screen is optional.

Given the extensive redesign, it's no surprise that the Tacoma's drivetrains have been revised. All Tacomas use a 2.4-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine, dubbed the i-Force, mated to an eight-speed automatic transmission. Opt for the entry-level SR and you'll have to make do



TOYOTA
The 2024 Toyota Tacoma TRD PreRunner's instrument panel is centered around a new standard 8-inch infotainment touchscreen; a larger 14-inch touchscreen is optional.



TOYOTA
The 2024 Toyota Tacoma TRD PreRunner provides 11.5 inches of ground clearance.

with 228 horsepower and 243 pound-feet of torque. Upgrading to the Tacoma SR5 brings the power and torque up to 278 horsepower and 317 pound-feet. However, say you'd like a six-speed manual transmission in your truck. Toyota is happy to oblige on SR Double Cab 4x4, TRD Sport Double Cab 4x4, and TRD Off-Road Double Cab 4x4 trims. If you do, power drops to 270 horsepower and 310 pound-feet of torque. In all Tacomas, power flows to the rear wheels, or all four. Maximum towing is rated at 6,500 pounds for the i-Force engine, while payload was rated at 1,460 pounds.

Come spring, Toyota will introduce the same engine mated to electric motors. Known as the i-Force Max, it will be the Tacoma's first gas-electric hybrid model. It generates a healthy 326 horsepower and 465 pound-feet of torque. But the new model's

hybrid driveline is aimed at increasing increase power and torque without affecting fuel economy.

If you're off-roading, you'll appreciate the Tacoma's 34.4-degree approach, 26.1-degree breakover and 26.1-degree departure angles.

We had the chance to sample pre-production versions of both the 2024 Toyota Tacoma TRD PreRunner Xtra Cab with a six-foot bed, as tested \$38,100, as well as a Tacoma Limited Double Cab with a five-foot bed, as tested \$52,100. A hybrid model wasn't available for testing.

The new driveline feels far more refined, and the use of an eight-speed automatic transmission allowed Toyota to tune the driveline so that there's always plenty of torque when you need it. It also gave the company a chance to quell the clamor from under the hood, providing this Taco-

ma with an interior that's far quieter than before, no matter what's happening. Say you're off-roading, clambering over rocks. Not only is the cabin blissfully silent, but you can disconnect the front sway bar for maximum articulation. With more than 11 inches of ground clearance, it seems as if the Tacoma can ascend or descend over just about any obstacle. Or so it seems. But once when civilization intrudes and macadam reappears, reconnecting the sway bar provides a comfortably civilized ride. It's here where the Tacoma Limited has an advantage in comfort thanks to its adaptive suspension, one of three suspension options for 2024.

There's plenty more to know about the Tacoma and its various iterations. But the bottom line is this: Toyota has revamped the Tacoma for 2024 to great effect, ensuring it retains its crown as America's leading midsize pickup. Look for it to reach dealers sometime in December.

Life & Style

Beyoncé's 'Renaissance' is No. 1 at the box office with \$21M debut

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

Beyoncé ruled the box office this weekend.

Her concert picture, "Renaissance: A Film by Beyoncé," opened in first place with \$21 million in North American ticket sales, according to estimates from AMC Theatres Sunday.

The post-Thanksgiving, early December box office is notoriously slow, but "Renaissance" defied the odds. Not accounting for inflation, it's the first time a film has opened over \$20 million on this weekend in 20 years (since "The Last Samurai").

Beyoncé wrote, directed and produced "Renaissance," which is focused on the tour for her Grammy-winning album. It debuted in 2,539 theaters in the U.S. and Canada, as well as 94 international territories, where it earned \$6.4 million from 2,621 theaters.

"On behalf of AMC Theatres Distribution and the entire theatrical industry, we thank Beyoncé for bringing this incredible film directly to her fans," said Elizabeth Frank, AMC Theatres executive vice president of worldwide programming, in a statement. "To see it resonate with fans and with film critics on a weekend that many in the industry typically neglect is a testament to her immense talent, not just as a performer, but as a producer and director."

Despite several other new releases including "Godzilla Minus One," the Hindi-language "Animal," Angel Studios' sci-fi thriller "The Shift," and Lionsgate's John

Woo-directed revenge pic "Silent Night," it was a slow weekend overall. Films in the top 10 are expected to gross only \$85 million in total.

But it was in this traditional "lull" that AMC Theatres found a good opportunity for "Renaissance" to shine.

"They chose a great weekend," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "There was competition but it was from very different kinds of movies."

Though "Renaissance" did not come close to matching the \$92.8 million debut of "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour" in October, it's still a very good start for a concert film. No one expected "Renaissance" to match "The Eras Tour," which is wrapping up its theatrical run soon with over \$250 million globally. Prior to Swift, the biggest concert film debuts



Beyoncé

(titles held by Miley Cyrus and Justin Bieber for their 2008 and 2011 films) had not surpassed the unadjusted sum of \$32 million.

The 39-city, 56-show "Renaissance" tour, which kicked off in Stockholm, Sweden in May and ended in Kansas City, Missouri in the fall, made over \$500 million and attracted over 2.7 million concertgoers. Swift's ongoing "Eras Tour," with 151 dates, is expected to gross some \$1.4 billion.

Both Beyoncé and Swift chose to partner with AMC Theatres to distribute their films, as opposed to a traditional studio. Both superstars have been supportive of one another, making splashy appearances at the other's premieres. Both had previously released films on Netflix ("Miss Americana" and "Homecoming"). And both are

reported to be receiving at least 50% of ticket sales.

Movie tickets to the show were more expensive than average, around \$23.32 versus Swift's \$20.78, according to data firm EntTelligence.

Critics and audiences gave "Renaissance" glowing reviews — it's sitting at 100% on Rotten Tomatoes and got a coveted A+ CinemaScore from opening weekend audiences who were polled. EntTelligence also estimates that the audience, around 900,000 strong, skewed a little older than Swift's.

"To have two concert films topping the chart in a single year is pretty unprecedented," Dergarabedian said.

But to compare them too closely would be a mistake.

"Taylor Swift was a total outlier and the result of a very specific set of circumstances," he said. "These two films are similar in genre only."

- "Renaissance: A Film by Beyoncé," \$21 million.
- "The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes," \$14.5 million.
- "Godzilla Minus One," \$11 million.
- "Trolls Band Together," \$7.6 million.
- "Wish," \$7.4 million.
- "Napoleon," \$7.1 million.
- "Animal," \$6.1 million.
- "The Shift," \$4.4 million.
- "Silent Night," \$3 million.
- "Thanksgiving," \$2.6 million.

Lionsgate's "The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes" fell to second place in its third weekend with an estimated \$14.5 million. The prequel has now earned over \$121 million domestically.

"Godzilla Minus One" took third place on the North American charts with \$11 million from 2,308 locations — the biggest opening for a foreign film in the U.S. this year. The well-reviewed Japanese blockbuster distributed by

Toho International cost only \$15 million to produce and has already earned \$23 million in Japan. Toho's 33rd Godzilla film is set in the aftermath of World War II, stars Ryunosuke Kamiki and was directed by Takashi Yamazaki.

"This year, we made a concentrated effort to answer the demand of the marketplace and make Godzilla globally accessible across many different platforms," said Koji Ueda, President of Toho Global, in a statement.

Kennedy Center Honors fetes Queen Latifah, Billy Crystal, Dionne Warwick

WASHINGTON (AP)—The newest group of Kennedy Center honorees, including comedian Billy Crystal and actor Queen Latifah, were feted Sunday night at a star-studded event commemorating their lifetime achievement in arts and entertainment.

Opera singer Renée Fleming, music star Barry Gibb and prolific hitmaker Dionne Warwick were also honored at the black-tie gala. Each received personalized tributes including appearances and performances that are typically kept secret from the honorees themselves.

President Joe Biden wel-

comed the honorees to the White House before the event, saying the performing arts "reflect who we are as Americans and as human beings."

The honorees "have helped shape how we see ourselves, how we see each other and how we see our world," said Biden who then introduced this year's class with a set of glowing superlatives about their work.

Biden and first lady Jill Biden then headed to the Kennedy Center to attend the festivities. The ceremony began with 2017 Kennedy Center honoree Gloria Estefan leading a troupe of dancers down

the aisle while performing her megahit "Get On Your Feet."

In announcing the recipients earlier this year, the Kennedy Center's president, Deborah F. Rutter, called them "an extraordinary mix of individuals who have redefined their art forms."

Crystal, 75, came to national prominence in the 1970s playing Jodie Dallas, one of the first openly gay characters on American network television, on the sitcom "Soap." He went on to a brief but memorable one-year stint on "Saturday Night Live" before starring in a string of movies, including hits such as "When Harry Met

Sally..." "The Princess Bride" and "City Slickers."

On the red carpet before the show, movie director Rob Reiner — who cast Crystal in multiple iconic roles — poked fun at the honoree. "I hope this doesn't give him a big head, because honestly his head's already big," Reiner said.

Reiner later narrated a large portion of Crystal's tribute, speaking from a stage made up as a replica of the diner from the famous scene in "When Harry Met Sally..." Further testimonials came from his "When Harry" costar Meg Ryan, Whoopi Goldberg, Bob Costas and

2009 Kennedy Center honoree Robert DeNiro. Lin-Manuel Miranda, a 2018 honoree, performed an original song in Crystal's honor.

Crystal, who also received the Kennedy Center's Mark Twain Prize for lifetime achievement in comedy in 2007, joins an elite group of comedians cited for both: David Letterman, Steve Martin, Lorne Michaels, Lily Tomlin, Carol Burnett and Neil Simon. Bill Cosby received both honors, but they were rescinded in 2018 following his sexual assault conviction, which later was overturned.

Marriage to angry, abusive drunk has become a prison

DEAR ABBY: I've been married to my husband for almost 43 years. We haven't had sex in more than 10 years. He is a nasty drunk, which has grown worse. He is emotionally abusive and calls me lazy and fat.

He hurt his right shoulder three years ago and refused to seek medical attention for it. Two years ago, he had all his teeth extracted. Since then, he has lost at least 50 pounds, which, unfortunately, I seem to have gained. He drinks until he's falling-down drunk at least twice a week, and he then becomes nasty with me and our daughter. What should I do?

HOPELESS IN TEXAS

DEAR HOPELESS: The relationship you have with your husband isn't a healthy one. Start getting yourself in better physical shape. Once you begin to take care of yourself, the better you will feel physically and emotionally. Begin attending Al-Anon meetings. There are many in almost every community. You can find a location at al-anon.org/info. Al-Anon is an offshoot of AA, and was created to provide support for friends and families of alcoholics. (Your husband qualifies.) After that, start looking for a job so you can gain some independence and eventually leave him completely. The atmosphere you have described is toxic.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a sister-in-law, "Greta," who is married

to my husband's older brother. I have invited her and their family to our home countless times over the past 10 years, giving plenty of time to RSVP. Greta has done the same, and I show up with my "brings." I then help to clean up and am pleasant.

Greta never attends our parties, gatherings, etc. She always responds with, "We have other plans," or, "We are just going to stay home." It hurts. Should I keep inviting them? Other family members are annoyed by her excuses. She has never liked me, but she's married to my husband's brother, and they have two children I would like to see. Should I stop?

COURTEOUS IN COLORADO

DEAR COURTEOUS: If you want to see your nieces and nephews, why not invite THEM out to do something with you? That way, you can interact with them without having to spend time with someone you know doesn't particularly like you. Greta might also be grateful to have some time to herself. Frankly, it's surprising that Greta is the one refusing those invitations for her entire family, which makes me wonder how close your husband and his brother are.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Where is the line, and how can I find it, between not judging someone and holding them accountable for their behavior? I know every situation is different, but is there some general guidance you can offer?

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



WONDERING IN OREGON

DEAR WONDERING: When you judge another person, it implies that you hold yourself above them. By judging someone, you are not necessarily holding that person accountable. Holding someone accountable doesn't necessarily mean you're judging the person, but rather establishing a boundary you feel shouldn't be crossed.

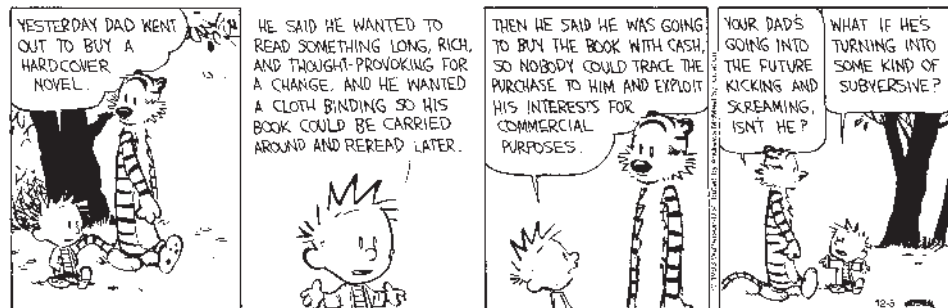
■ ■ ■

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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



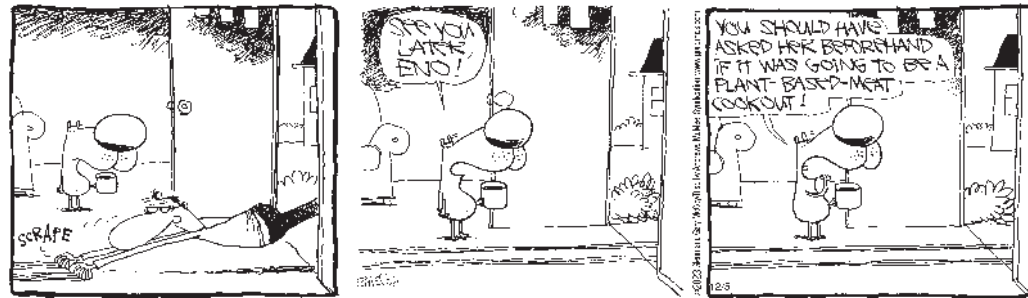
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Shopping center
5 Entryway
9 Cpl.'s subordinate
12 Henry —
13 Competent
14 Classic car
15 "Peter and the Wolf" composer
17 Ear-related prefix
18 London gallery
19 Spreadsheet software
21 Stoned
24 Manitoba tribe
25 Beans go-with
26 Works on galleys
30 Rock producer Brian
31 The staff of life
32 Conk out
33 Concealment of crimes

DOWN

1 Super Bowl
2 Tire filler
3 Brazilian city
4 Short-form video-sharing app
5 Loony
6 Theater award
7 Yucatan
8 Adored
9 Went
10 Big party
11 Hip
16 Granola morsel
20 Ballot marks
21 Oil cartel
22 Taboo
23 Service suppliers
24 IRS employees
26 Loyal
27 "Uh-huh"
28 Fork part
29 Salty septet
31 Ale seller
34 Tokyo, once
35 "Hear me out"
37 Documentary Burns
38 Test the waters
39 "Yeah, right"
40 "Family Guy" mom
41 Diner sign
44 Genetic letters
45 Rage
46 "I do," for one
47 "Guinness Book" suffix

Solution time: 22 mins.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U | N | I | T | D | A | B | A | P | S | E |
| P | O | L | I | T | I | C | O | C | I | T |
| C | H | E | S | S | M | E | N | T | E | A |
| S | C | O | U | R | A | S | F | A | | |
| H | O | C | U | R | G | F | S | I | I | D |
| P | H | A | S | C | T | I | N | I | I | R |
| I | F | S | F | D | E | F | T | S | | |
| S | H | E | F | F | S | I | A | | | |
| O | M | A | R | M | O | T | O | R | M | E |
| F | O | R | T | F | E | V | E | R | O | N |
| I | S | P | S | | N | O | W | | E | A |

Yesterday's answer 12-5

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Frankie Muniz, 38; Amy Acker, 47; Margaret Cho, 55; John Rzeznik, 58.

Happy Birthday: Slow down, consider your options and don't let anyone sway you in the wrong direction. Eliminate delays and restrictions by handling matters yourself. The fewer people you involve in your plans, the easier it will be to reach your destination on time and successfully this year. Trusting your instincts and getting firsthand information will positively impact what you achieve this year. Your numbers are 4, 12, 15, 28, 36, 42, 49.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Put your money to good use and target what's important to you. Update documents, contracts and investments to ensure you don't miss an opportunity. Protect what you do to earn a living and how you handle your cash from people offering misleading information. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Live, learn and move forward. Establish who and what you want to support and initiate your interest and contributions. An open discussion will clear up any unresolved issues and bring about positive change. Don't act in haste, or you may lose leverage. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Be a good listener. Put your energy into professional responsibilities. Refuse to let anyone lead you astray. Be direct and leave no room for misunderstandings. How you deal with others will determine what happens next. Show your strengths, not your weaknesses. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Home is where the heart is, and finding innovative ways to add to your comfort and

convenience will make you smile. A romantic opportunity or a trendy new look will motivate you to accept change and unanticipated opportunities. Embrace life. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Have a plan or schedule before you start. Don't ruin your chance to reach your objective because you take on too much or can't decide what to pursue. Money management and practicality will dictate how much you achieve and how far you get. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A change will be a learning experience that will help you sort through what you want to do next. Consider your budget and what it will take to make you happy with the outcome. Don't sit back when action is required to reach your goal. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Keep your thoughts and intentions to yourself until you are sure your ideas are doable. Taking on issues riddled with emotions will require your full attention. Actions will speak louder than words. A financial or contractual opportunity will unfold if you move forward using discipline and common sense. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't let the little things get to you. Take care of your responsibilities and head in a more desirable direction. Make domestic changes that will make your life easier. An innovative idea will bring you closer to someone who shares your sentiments. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Reset your emotions and incorporate a practical way to move forward. Say no to anyone who tries to interfere with your plans or take advantage of you. The best way to reach your goal is to get things done by being focused and disciplined. **

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Be the voice of reason. Manufacture what you want your life to represent. Put changes in place to ensure your comfort and happiness, and make creative investments offering long-term benefits and security. Choose patience over intolerance and love over hate. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Your involvement and determination will help you reach your goal. Being aware of what's expected of you and delivering on time will be satisfying and offer relief that everything will be all right. Productivity and sticking to a budget are in your best interest. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't be hard on yourself or others. Look at what's unfolding and counter with a positive attitude and the willingness to do something to make a difference. A kind word will change the way others view you. A financial gain or gift is apparent. ***

Birthday Baby: You are important, direct and motivated. You are innovative and adaptable

☺: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☹: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☹☹: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☹☹☹: Aim high; start new projects. ☹☹☹☹: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | | | | 1 | 7 | | | | | |
| | 6 | | 2 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 | | |
| 9 | 1 | | | 3 | 7 | | 6 | | | |
| | | | 4 | 5 | | | 6 | 8 | 7 | |
| | | | | 7 | 8 | 2 | | 3 | | |
| 3 | | | | | 9 | | 1 | | | |
| | | | 1 | | | | 2 | | | |
| | 3 | | 9 | 4 | | | 7 | | | |
| | 8 | 9 | 3 | | | | 4 | 6 | | |

Difficulty: ★★

12/5

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 2 |
| 9 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 3 |
| 8 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| 2 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| 7 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 9 |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| 3 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 7 |
| 1 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 6 |
| 6 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 1 |

Difficulty: ★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them. Circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

BRITISH COLUMBIA WINES

Solution: 14 letters

C H E R R Y A N N O D R A H C
P L U M Z P I N O T N O I R O
H O D R A H C R O O R S E E K
T N E M R E F S R C P N B T A
S A U V I G N O N I I T A K N
D Y F S H H S A N M O S C E A
N I R S S E L O A L T C K E G
A N A A O B T R R E E E Y R A
L T S L H G T E N R E B A C N
S R E G R Z M Y R F O L R Y V
I I R I R L Y S H U U A D K A
F G S U H C C A B T T M N C L
L U W V I O G N I E R X D O L
U E T A G S L I A U Q A E R E
G N I L S E I R V E L V E T Y

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12/5

Bacchus, Backyard, Blanc, Cabernet, Chardonnay, Cherry, Earthy, Ferment, Fraser, Gewurztraminer, Glass, Gulf Islands, Intrigue, Lush, Malbec, Merlot, Okanagan Valley, Orchard, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Plum, Quails' Gate, Riesling, Rocky Creek, Rose, Sauvignon, Shiraz, Syrah, Taste, Texture, Tour, Velvety, Vignier

Yesterday's Answer: Foundation

The NEW Wonderword Grand Millennium #1 in LARGE PRINT is now available at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480. In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Purdy, Samuel lead unstoppable offense for 49ers in win over Eagles



PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Brock Purdy threw for 314 yards and four touchdowns,

Deebo Samuel scored three TDs and Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts was checked for a concussion in the San Francisco 49ers' 42-19 win over Philadelphia on Sunday.

The Niners (9-3) scored touchdowns on six straight possessions in this fiery NFC championship game rematch, which showed this year's title game might not run again through Philly, after all.

The Eagles (10-2) suffered a scare when Hurts jogged off the field in the fourth and went straight to the locker room. He was cleared to play and returned to action with about 10 minutes left.

By the time last season's MVP runner-up returned, the Eagles trailed 35-13 and were on their way toward their first home loss of the season. Hurts hit DeVonta Smith for a 2-yard TD on his return drive. He finished 26-of-45 passing for 298 yards.

Purdy put the finishing touches on the win with a 46-yard TD pass to Samuel.

Hard feelings spilled into the game, highlighted by a scrap in the third quarter that got 49ers linebacker Dre Greenlaw and the Eagles' chief security officer, Dom DiSandro, tossed.

PACKERS 27, CHIEFS 19

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—Jordan Love connected with Christian Watson on two of his three touchdown passes, and resurgent Green Bay beat Kansas City for its third straight win.

The Packers scored touchdowns on three of their first four drives and never trailed, with their defense making two big stops in the last 5 1/2 minutes. Green Bay knocked down Patrick Mahomes' pass into the end zone on the game's final play.

The Packers (6-6) improved their December record to 16-0 under coach Matt LaFleur. The only franchise to win more consecutive December games was the Chargers with 18 straight from 2006-09.

Love went 25 of 36 for 267 yards. Tight end Ben Sims had a 1-yard catch for his first career touchdown, and Love added TD passes of 9 and 12 yards to Watson.

LIONS 33, SAINTS 28

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Sam LaPorta had career highs of nine catches for 140 yards, including an early touchdown and a crucial first-down snag in the final minutes, and Detroit beat New Orleans to post its best record through 12 games since 1962.

The Saints lost quarterback



San Francisco 49ers wide receiver Deebo Samuel (19) runs with the ball before scoring on a touchdown catch against the Philadelphia Eagles during the second half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 3, 2023, in Philadelphia.

Derek Carr in the fourth quarter to back, shoulder and head injuries. Carr was hurt on a penalized hit by Bruce Irvin, who drove the weight of his body into the quarterback.

Jared Goff passed for 213 yards and two TDs for the Lions (9-3), who raced to a three-touchdown lead and then held off a valiant comeback bid by the Saints. New Orleans (5-7) fell one game behind first-place Atlanta in the league's weakest division, the NFC South.

After falling behind 21-0 in the first quarter, the Saints pulled as close as 24-21 late in the third. The Saints also had the ball at midfield with a chance to take the lead in the final three minutes, but turned the ball over on downs when Jameis Winston threw behind Chris Olave.

Detroit was able to run out the clock from there, thanks to first-down catches by LaPorta and Josh Reynolds.

TEXANS 22, BRONCOS 17

HOUSTON (AP)—Nico Collins had a career-high 191 yards receiving and a fourth-quarter touchdown, and Jimmie Ward intercepted Russell Wilson in the end zone with 9 seconds left to preserve Houston's win over Denver.

Ward leapt in front of intended receiver Lucas Krull to secure the fourth victory in five games for the Texans (7-5) and snap a five-game winning streak for the Broncos (6-6).

Wilson was intercepted a season-high three times, all of them after halftime. Derek Stingley Jr. had the first two picks for the Texans. The Broncos, who had forced 15 turnovers during their winning streak, did not have a takeaway.

Houston rookie C.J. Stroud threw for 274 yards to end a

streak of four straight games with at least 300 yards passing. Star rookie receiver Tank Dell injured his ankle in the first half and was carted off the field.

Texans rookie defensive end Will Anderson Jr. had two sacks, four quarterback hits, deflected one of the balls that Stingley intercepted and deflected a punt.

RAMS 36, BROWNS 19

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)—Matthew Stafford threw three touchdown passes, Puka Nacua became the first Rams rookie wide receiver to reach 1,000 yards in a season, and Los Angeles beat Cleveland.

The Rams (6-6) have won three straight for the first time since winning the Super Bowl after the 2021 season. They are back in the playoff race after dropping three straight before their bye week.

Stafford—who was 22 of 37 for 279 yards—connected with Nacua, Demarcus Robinson and Cooper Kupp for scores. Nacua, who left the game briefly with a rib injury, finished with four receptions for 105 yards, including a 70-yard TD in the first quarter. He also had two rushes for 34 yards.

Joe Flacco became Cleveland's fourth starting quarterback this season and finished 23 of 44 for 254 yards with two touchdowns and one interception. The Browns (7-5) have dropped two straight but remain in the thick of the AFC playoff race.

Kyren Williams had 21 carries for 88 yards for the Rams, including a 1-yard TD late in the fourth quarter to put it out of reach.

COLTS 31, TITANS 28, OT

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Gardner Minshew threw a

4-yard touchdown pass to Michael Pittman with 2:31 left in overtime, and Indianapolis beat Tennessee for its fourth straight victory.

The Colts (7-5) had to score a touchdown after the Titans' Nick Folk made a 46-yard field goal with 4:19 left in overtime. Minshew threw for 312 yards and two touchdowns as he won his fourth straight game for the first time in his five NFL seasons.

Tennessee (4-8) lost at Nissan Stadium for the first time this season and has yet to win consecutive games overall.

The Titans blew a 17-7 lead, and Folk missed his first extra point this season with 5:26 left in regulation that could have put Tennessee up 26-25. Backup quarterback Ryan Tannehill was the holder on the missed kick after punter Ryan Stonehouse, the regular holder, was injured.

FALCONS 13, JETS 8

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—Deshaun Watson threw a 20-yard touchdown pass to MyCole Pruitt and Atlanta took sole possession of first place in the NFC South with an ugly win over New York.

The Falcons (6-6) have back-to-back wins for the first time since starting the season 2-0.

The Jets (4-8) got an early safety but couldn't get anything going—again—on offense in losing their fifth straight game. New York pulled quarterback Tim Boyle and replaced him with Trevor Siemian in the fourth quarter, but it was more of the same misery in a rain-soaked MetLife Stadium that appeared about half full.

Siemian and the Jets had a chance to win with 1:53 left but again were ineffective. New York had three turnovers, and the loss makes the Jets' playoff

chances—and the prospect of Aaron Rodgers returning this season—more remote.

DOLPHINS 45, COMMANDERS 15

LANDOVER, Md. (AP)—Tyreek Hill had two touchdowns among his 157 yards receiving, and AFC East-leading Miami routed Washington, getting to 9-3 for the first time since 2001.

Tua Tagovailoa was 18 of 24 for 280 yards, including TD passes of 78 and 60 yards to Hill, the NFL's leading receiver, who was left wide open on his 11th and 12th trips to the end zone this season.

De'Von Achane ran for two touchdowns after missing five of the past six games with a knee injury. Raheem Mostert also had a rushing TD for Miami's league-leading offense, which put up 406 yards.

The Commanders (4-9) had no answer for Hill in the first game with coach Ron Rivera calling the defensive plays after he fired coordinator Jack Del Rio.

Washington's Sam Howell threw a pick-6 to Miami linebacker Andrew Van Ginkel and was sacked three times. Howell ran for two touchdowns while going 12 of 23 for 127 yards. He's been sacked 58 times this season and has thrown 14 picks, both of which lead the league.

CARDINALS 24, STEELERS 10

PITTSBURGH (AP)—James Conner ran for 105 yards and a pair of touchdowns against his old team as Arizona won at Pittsburgh for the first time since 1969.

The Cardinals (3-10) took control late in the first half with a 99-yard touchdown drive that ended with a 5-yard strike from

Kyler Murray to Trey McBride. They led the rest of the way, enduring a pair of lengthy delays due to severe weather.

The Steelers (7-5) lost starting quarterback Kenny Pickett to an ankle injury late in the first half and scored their only touchdown in garbage time on a pass from backup Mitch Trubisky to Diontae Johnson.

The Cardinals improved to 2-2 since Murray's return from a torn ACL in his right knee.

CHARGERS 6, PATRIOTS 0

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—Justin Herbert threw for 212 yards and set up a pair of Cameron Dicker field goals that were all Los Angeles needed to blank New England and its latest hapless quarterback, Bailey Zappe.

The Chargers (5-7) had their first shutout in six years. Keenan Allen came back from a thigh bruise to catch five passes for 58 yards, but the only scoring Los Angeles could manage on a cold and rainy day was a pair of 38-yards field goals in the second quarter.

The Patriots (2-10) benched Mac Jones in favor of Zappe but still lost their fifth straight game. They've been shut out at home twice this season, a first in franchise history.

It was the third time in a row that New England gave up 10 or fewer points—and lost. They are the first team to do that since the 1938 Chicago Cardinals.

BUCCANEERS 21, PANTHERS 18

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Mike Evans scored on a 75-yard reception and joined Jerry Rice as the only players in NFL history to string together 10 consecutive seasons with 1,000-plus yards receiving while helping Tampa Bay beat Carolina.

The Bucs (5-7) won for only the second time in their past eight games, climbing into a tie for second place in the weak NFC South. Carolina (1-11) scored late to pull within a field goal, but No. 1 overall draft pick Bryce Young threw an interception with just over two minutes remaining, ending any chance of coming from behind to win the Panthers' debut under interim coach Chris Tabor.

Evans finished with seven receptions for 162 yards, increasing his season totals to 61 catches for 1,012 yards and 10 touchdowns. Rice set the league record of 11 straight seasons with more than 1,000 yards receiving from 1986 through 1996.

Rachaad White scored an early touchdown and receiver Chris Godwin scored on a 19-yard run early in the fourth quarter for Tampa Bay. Chuba Hubbard rushed 104 yards and two TDs for Carolina.

Jim Leyland elected to baseball's Hall of Fame

» Becomes 23rd manager in Cooperstown



NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Jim Leyland left his living room in Thornburg, Pennsylvania, and had gone upstairs to lie down, convinced the call to Cooperstown wasn't coming.

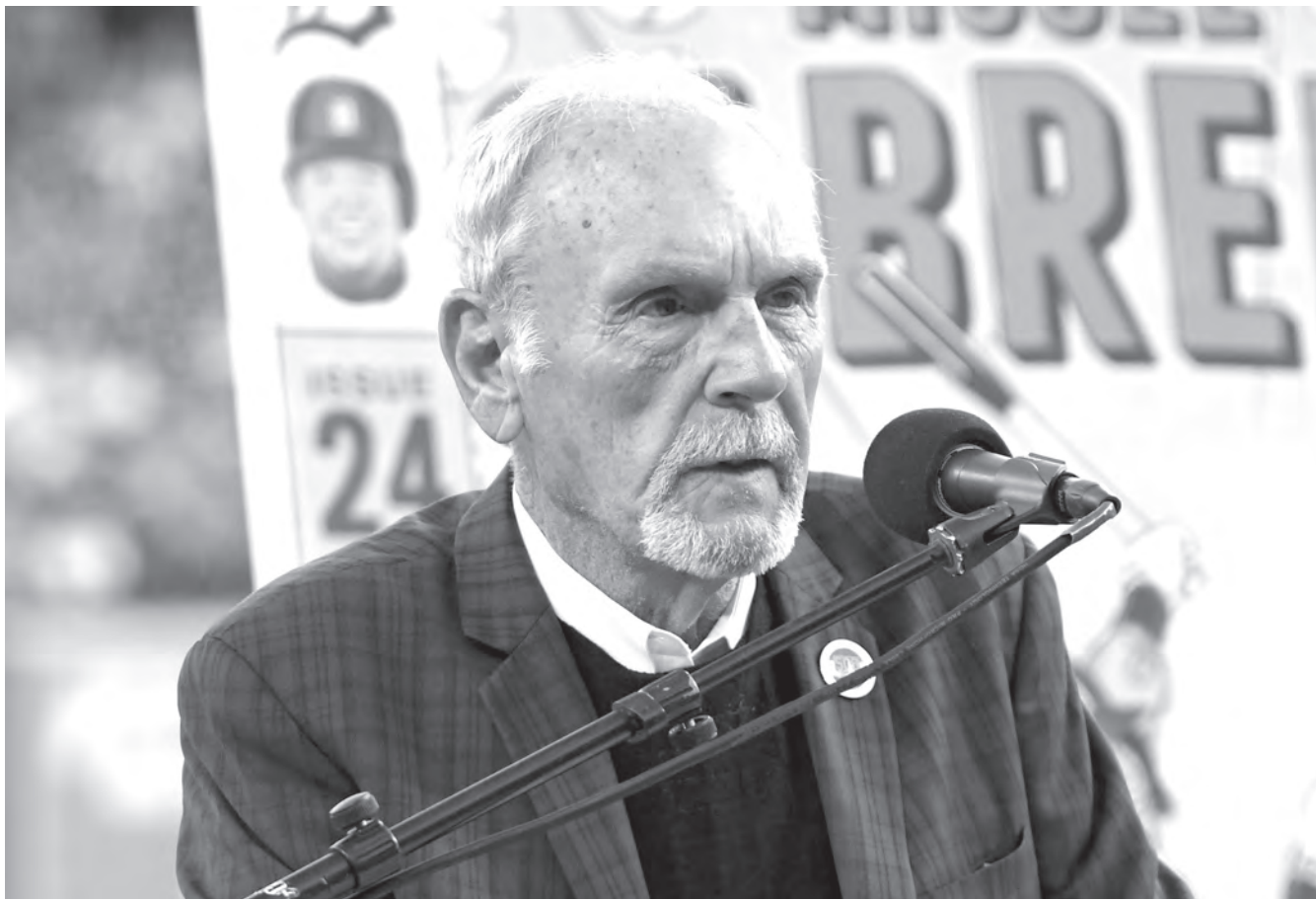
"They had told us it would be between 6:30 and 7:15," he said, "but I thought when I didn't get it by a quarter to 7, it wasn't going to happen, so I went up just to rest a minute, kind of get my thoughts together."

Just then, as son Pat arrived upstairs, the phone rang. Hall chairman Jane Forbes Clark was on the line and Leyland had been voted in, two weeks shy of his 79th birthday.

"There was definitely a tear in my eye," Leyland said.

An entertaining and at-times crusty manager who led the Florida Marlins to a World Series title in 1997 and won 1,769 regular-season games over 22 seasons, Leyland received 15 of 16 votes Sunday from the contemporary era committee for managers, executives and umpires. He becomes the 23rd manager in the hall.

Honest, profane and constantly puffing on a cigarette, Leyland embodied the image of the prickly baseball veteran with a gruff but wise voice. He



Former Detroit Tigers manager Jim Leyland addresses the crowd during a ceremony honoring Miguel Cabrera for hitting 500 career home runs before a baseball game against the Kansas City Royals, Sept. 24, 2021, in Detroit.

is 18th on the career list for manager wins but is second behind Joe McCarthy among those who never played in the major leagues. He also was ejected 73 times, tied with Clark Griffith for 10th in major league history.

Leyland's players included Barry Bonds, Gary Sheffield, Larry Walker, Miguel Cabrera, Justin Verlander and Max Scherzer.

"I think young people, young players are searching for discipline," Leyland said. "So we all have our insecurities and I think even sometimes players do, even though they're great players. And I think that they're always looking for that leadership. I tried to impress on them what it was to be a professional and how tough this game is to play. And

I also told them almost every day how good they were."

Former player and manager Lou Piniella fell one vote short for the second time after also getting 11 in 2018. Former player, broadcaster and NL President Bill White was two shy.

Managers Cito Gaston and Davey Johnson, umpires Joe West and Ed Montague, and general manager Hank Peters all received fewer than five votes.

Leyland managed Pittsburgh, Florida, Colorado and Detroit from 1986 to 2013. He will be inducted into the Hall on July 21 along with players voted in by the Baseball Writers' Association of America, whose balloting will be announced on Jan. 23.

Adrián Beltré, Joe Mauer, Chase Utley, David Wright, José Bautista and Matt Holliday are among the players eligible for the BBWAA ballot for the first time in the current vote. Holdovers include Todd Helton, who fell 11 votes short this year, and Billy Wagner, who was 27 shy.

Leyland grew up in the Tole-

do, Ohio, suburb of Perrysburg. He was a minor league catcher and occasional third baseman in the Tigers organization from 1965-70, never rising above Double-A and finishing with a .222 batting average, four homers and 102 RBIs.

"Being not a very good player myself, I realized how hard it was to play the game," he said.

Leyland coached in the Tigers minor league system, then started managing with Bristol of the Appalachian Rookie League in 1971. After 11 seasons as a minor league manager, he left the Tigers to serve as Tony La Russa's third base coach with the Chicago White Sox from 1982-85, then embarked on a major league managerial career that saw him take over the Pirates from 1986-96.

The Pittsburgh Press was said to have run a headline: "Jim Who?"

"Yeah, it was 'Jim Who?' when I got here and, you know, I'm still here," Leyland said. "At least people know me a little better than they did when I first got here."

Pittsburgh got within one out of a World Series trip in 1992 before Francisco Cabrera's two-run single in Game 7 won the NL pennant for Atlanta. The Pirates sank from there following the departures of Bonds and ace pitcher Doug Drabek as free agents, and Leyland left after Pittsburgh's fourth straight losing season in 1996. Five days following his last game, he chose the Marlins over the White Sox, Red Sox and Angels.

Florida won the title the next year in the franchise's fifth season, the youngest expansion team to earn a championship at the time. But the Marlins sold off veterans and tumbled to 54-108 in 1998, and Leyland left for the Rockies. He quit after one season, saying he lacked the needed passion, and worked as a scout for the St. Louis Cardinals.

"I did a lousy job my last year of managing," Leyland said then. "I stunk because I was burned out. When I left there, I sincerely believed that I would not manage again. ... I always missed the competition, but the last couple of years — and this stuck in my craw a little bit — I did not want my managerial career to end like that."

He replaced Alan Trammell as Tigers manager ahead of the 2006 season and stayed through 2013.

Leyland's teams finished first six times and went 1,769-1,728. He won American League pennants in 2006, losing to St. Louis in a five-game World Series, and 2012, getting swept by San Francisco. Leyland was voted Manager of the Year in 1990, 1992 and 2006, and he managed the U.S. to the 2017 World Baseball Classic championship, the Americans' only title.

Now he's alongside the elite. "It's the final stop," Leyland said. "To land there in Cooperstown, it doesn't get any better than that. I mean, that's the ultimate. I certainly never thought it was going to happen. Most people probably don't. But it did, and I'm sure I'm going to enjoy it."

David Ortiz hopes new Red Sox boss Breslow turns away from analytics some

By **KEN POWTAK**
ASSOCIATED PRESS



Hall of Famer David Ortiz has watched his former team, the Boston Red Sox, stumble to consecutive last-place finishes and in three of the past four seasons.

Now he believes his old teammate and recently hired Chief Baseball Officer, Craig Breslow, can turn things around by going away from analytics somewhat.

"I heard yesterday that he's trying to shut down a little bit of the analytic side and going back to the old-fashioned part of the game," Ortiz said Friday in a video call with The Associated Press from his golf tournament—the 15th annual David Ortiz Celebrity Golf Classic—in Marco Island, Florida.

"I think that's a good way to start. I think the game has transformed everything to analytics and, at the end of the day, analytics can only cover so much," he said. "You need to have people with heart,

people with spirit, people that have been in the situation that can give some guidance to the young blood and teach them how to put up with situations."

Ortiz points to this past World Series and postseason as proof that experience and veteran managers pay off, bringing up recently retired Dusty Baker (Houston), Bruce Bochy of World Series champion Texas and Torey Lovullo of Arizona.

"You see all these guys playing for the old-school managers and all of them have a different idea of the game—learning from these dinosaurs," Ortiz said. "Those are guys that have been around for a long time and they have something to bring to the table. They're teaching those players something that nobody has the past five, 10 years and that's why these guys are winning. We just need to go—not all the way (away from analytics)—but we need to emphasize (experience) at some point of it."

As far as free agents for the Red Sox to consider, Big Papi knows Shohei Ohtani

would be a huge prize.

"Who doesn't? Everybody would like to have Ohtani on their ballclub, but how many people are going to have the opportunity to?" the three-time World Series winner with the Red Sox said. "You're talking one of the best players in the history of the game that is a free agent. Who knows? It'll take a lot of money to sign this guy, a lot of money."

Ortiz, who recently turned 48 and was inducted into the Hall in 2022, feels like Breslow having played the game in a pressure-packed city like Boston will help in his new job.

"All those little details that a GM that hadn't been in a clubhouse doesn't know, he knows it," Ortiz said. "I'm very confident about Breslow doing his thing out there as a GM because he's been in that situation before."

The David Ortiz Golf Classic raises money to provide critical pediatric healthcare to children in New England and his native country, the Dominican Republic.

Ohtani voted major leagues' top designated hitter for 3rd straight year

NEW YORK (AP)—Shohei Ohtani was voted the majors' best designated hitter on Thursday and joined David Ortiz as the only players to win the award three years in a row.

Ohtani won the Edgar Martinez Outstanding Designated Hitter Award after hitting .304 with an AL-high 44 homers, 96 RBIs, eight triples and 20 stolen bases for the Los Angeles Angels in a season at the plate that ended Sept. 3

because of an oblique injury. The two-way star was 10-5 with a 3.14 ERA in 23 starts on the mound, striking out 167 and walking 55 in 132 innings before tearing the ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow on Aug. 23.

Ortiz won the DH award five years in a row from 2003-07.

Ohtani finished ahead of Atlanta's Marcell Ozuna, Houston's Yordan Alvarez, Philadelphia's Bryce Harper

and the Los Angeles Dodgers' J.D. Martinez in voting by beat writers, broadcasters and public relations departments. Players were eligible with 100 or more at-bats as a designated hitter.

The 29-year-old Ohtani became the first two-time unanimous MVP, winning the AL honor in 2021 and this year.

Ohtani and Martinez became free agents after the World Series.

Country Club of the Pacific celebrates 50 years of golfing tradition

YONA, Guam—The Country Club of the Pacific announced the winners of its 50th anniversary Golf Classic invitational tournament on Saturday, Dec. 2. First place men's low gross was won by Stussy Shimizu with a score of 74, and first place women's low gross was won by Tessie Blair with a score of 90.

"This invitational golf tournament was a commemorative celebration of CCP's 50th anniversary, a significant milestone for the country club," said Ben



From left to right, James "Jimmy" Shimizu, Guam Power Authority programmer analyst supervisor; Tom Shimizu, Ambros general manager; Frank Shimizu Sr., Ambros president and chief executive officer; and Frank Shimizu III, Ambros Inventory planner-Consumer Division.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ferguson, senior managing director of P.H.R. Ken Micronesia Inc. "For five decades, CCP has been Guam's premiere and most challenging golf course for both residents and visitors alike. We will continue to embrace the Håfa Adai spirit as we provide our customers with a unique golf experience. We thank our customers for their continued loyalty throughout the years and congratulate all the winners."

The CCP 50th Anniversary Golf Classic provided an Individual Callaway scoring format for men and women. CCP hosted this year's tournament in celebration of their 50th anniversary in Guam. Jonathan Cramer, CCP general manager, added, "The team at CCP has done a great job preparing the course for a challenging day of golf. We appreciate the support from P.H.R. Ken Micronesia and Ambros in making the tournament memorable for all." CCP also announced additional winners during their anniversary banquet at the CCP Clubhouse following the tournament:

WOMEN

Low Gross: Tessie Blair
1st Low Net: Annie Lee
2nd Low Net: Keum Ran Choi
3rd Low Net: Mina Manibusan

MEN

Low Gross: Stussy Shimizu
1st Low Net: Mike Bautista
2nd Low Net: Stussy Shimizu
3rd Low Net: TJ Hubert

CLOSEST TO THE PIN

Hole #2: Ray Quintanilla
Hole #12: Ho Suk Moon

LONGEST DRIVE

Men: Mike Bautista
Women: Deniece Hoya

CCP thanks the event's presenting sponsors—P.H.R. Ken Micronesia, Inc., and Ambros Inc., who provided complimentary food and beverages throughout the course.

CCP is a landmark heritage golf course on Guam that was founded in 1973 and designed by renowned Japanese golf course architects Seizo Tomizawa and Hirochika Tomizawa. (PR)

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of training and competing culminated into a night of pride, goodbyes, and celebration.

Volunteers, officials, and performers poured onto the field to be recognized for their hard work, then the 24 flag bearers of each island nation that participated came out and lined up in the middle of the stadium for the crowd to see and cheer them on.

Next to parade in and say their final goodbyes were the athletes of each nation themselves—first was Papua New Guinea, then host Solomon Islands.

Performers then joined the athletes seated in the middle of the field, along with Solo, the 2023 Pacific Games mascot, and a giant plastic sculpture, and treated the crowd with song and dance.

Jenly Wini, a female weightlifter from Solomon Islands, and a male weightlifter from



Lakhan

Fiji, Taniela Rainibogi, were then named best female and male athletes of the 2023 Pacific Games.

Before closing remarks from Pacific Games Council president Vidhya Lakhan, Louis Provost, president of the Olympic Committee of French Polynesia, said Tahiti would be honored to host the 2027 Pacific Games.

During Provost's speech, a video showing the islands that make up French Polynesia were greeted by cheers from the crowd and from the huge Tahitian delegation that was seated next to Team NMI.



Provost

Part of Provost's speech said that they ensure the athletes will feel at home by their hospitality and kindness. "Today we say goodbye with hearts full of gratitude... see you in Tahiti in 2027," said Provost.

After, a powerful war dance performance was led by Tahitian powerlifter Heimanarii Tavi that held the crowd captive for a few minutes, Lakhan then gave his remarks.

Lakhan said Honiara "delivered a Games of which every Solomon Islander should be proud."

"We came from all corners of the Pacific to give credence

to the purpose and objectives of these Games as promulgated by our forefathers when they established and hosted the first Pacific Games in Suva, Fiji in 1963," said Lakhan.

"These Games have been a gift from them to us, the future generation of Pacific Islanders. For us to meet, create bonds of kinship, friendship and brotherhood among the people of the Pacific region," he said. "The 17th Pacific Games was no exception. The government and the people of Solomon Islands, under the leadership of their Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, by hosting these Games, not only united and strengthened the bond between the people of Solomon Islands, but also the people of the Pacific."

After Lakhan's remarks, fireworks lit up the sky, then welcomed all athletes on the field to join in dance as the Solomons drew the curtain on hosting the 2023 Pacific Games.

CHEERS

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Davy Laxa got a bronze in the men's under 65kg class.

"It's been a while since we last sent representatives in the Pacific Games in the bodybuilding event, so I am so proud that we just did not compete, but we also won medals. We're here at the airport during the send-off and also at the welcoming event to show our full support to our delegation," Clayton said.

Team Marianas chef de mission Nick Gross led the NMI delegation's return to Saipan after leaving the island last Nov. 15 via charter flight (Solomon Airlines). They then spent more than two weeks in Honiara and competed in athletics, beach volleyball, bodybuilding, football, golf, soccer, swimming, tennis, and va'a.

"I sincerely thank each of you for your commitment to Team Marianas and your patience and support over the last few weeks. I am proud of our showing and your ability to overcome the obstacles and stay focused throughout. It has truly been a pleasure to work alongside you and lead Team NMI. Rest, recuperate, and enjoy knowing

that we gave it our all. Spend some time assessing your individual performances and drawing up a plan to improve where needed, for the next opportunity to compete and represent is just over the horizon. Biba NMI!" Gross said.

Northern Marianas National Paddle Sports Federation president Justin Andrew, who was part of the delegation and served as manager of the va'a team, was overwhelmed with the welcome they received from families and friends.

"We're surprised to see a lot of people and the banners, this is a very nice gesture," Andrew said. Now, we will go home and get the much-needed rest and then work on our programs again."

NMSA president Jerry Tan, vice president Ray Tebuteb, treasurer John Hirsh, and board member Alex Sablan also greeted the NMI delegation as they returned home last Sunday night.

"We are so proud of what our Team Marianas athletes and officials have accomplished in the 2023 Pacific Games. They did not only do well in their respective competitions by winning medals,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMI swim team members and officials pose for a photo after receiving a warm welcome at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Sunday night.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

An NMI athlete receives a warm hug from a family member upon arrival at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Sunday night.

but the entire delegation have also shown sportsmanship, resilience, teamwork, and respect for their competitors and the host country," Tan said.

Team Marianas' participation to the 2023 Pacific Games

was made possible by the strong support of the Joeten Daidai Foundation, Triple J, Crowne Plaza Resort, IT&E, IP&E, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Mobil, Tan Holdings, and McDonald's of Guam & Saipan. (PR)

JAPANESE

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Saipan Tribune.

Northern Mariana Islands Cycling Federation president Vince Seman congratulated all the winners and participants of the 2023 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle.

"I'm just really glad that the Hell of the Marianas is back. We had been taking a little break since COVID-19. But thanks to the Marianas Visitors Authority and their support we made sure that we try and restart HOM this year."

Seman said with more than 150 participants—50% of whom were from off-island—he's proud that HOM in a way got to kick off the return of sports tourism in the CNMI.

"We got a very large contingent from Korea and a few riders from Japan, one from Russia, and some from the United States. It's just a great turnout. It's also a new format, as we had to reconfigure the route with all the construction along Beach

Road and especially now that the San Juan Road is open, we really had to make sure we took advantage of the natural beauty on the backside."

Seman said aside from one serious accident when a female rider crashed in the first few moments of the race near Kensington Hotel, the 2023 edition of the Hell of the Marianas was mostly accident-free.

"We wish her well but medical personnel were quick to come on the scene. Aside from that and one flat tire and one broken chain, I think the race this year has gone a lot smoother compared to previous years," he said.

The 2023 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle was sponsored by Seman Law Offices LLC, Tan Holdings and Tan Siu Lin Foundation, IP&E, Turn-Key Solutions, Triple J Group of Companies, Pacific Trading Co., Hyatt Regency Saipan, The Bike Shop Saipan, Marpac Inc., and Herman's Modern Bakery. It was organized by the NMICF with help from the MVA.



MARK RABAGO

Ryohei Fujita, center, and Rinichiro Shigeta, left, and third place Ryan Matienzo atop the podium during last Saturday's awards banquet for the 2023 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

2023 Honiara, Solomon Islands Pacific Games



The National Stadium in Honiara is flooded by athletes, officials, guests, and spectators, as the 2023 Pacific Games came to a close last Saturday night in the Solomon Islands.

LEIGH GASES



LEIGH GASES

Some members of Team NMI watch the last performances of the Pacific Games closing ceremony last Saturday night at the National Sports Stadium.



LEIGH GASES

Team NMI members pose for a photo during the closing ceremony of the 2023 Pacific Games last Saturday night at the National Sports Stadium.



LEIGH GASES

Some members of the NMI national soccer team, golf team, and athletics team, pose for a photo during the 2023 Pacific Games closing ceremony.



LEIGH GASES

Team NMI parades through the track and unto the field of the National Sports Stadium during the 2023 Pacific Games closing ceremony last Saturday night.



LEIGH GASES

Some of NMI Men's National Soccer Team pose for a photo as they parade through the track of the National Sports Stadium during the 2023 Pacific Games closing ceremony.



LEIGH GASES

Tania Tan served as Team NMI's closing ceremony flagbearer with a girl from Malaita, Solomon Islands holding the Northern Mariana Islands banner during the closing ceremony last Saturday night at the National Sports Stadium.



**Purdy, Samuel
lead unstoppable
offense for 49ers
in win over
Eagles.**

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Saipan Tribune Sports

**Country Club
of the Pacific
celebrates 50
years of golfing
tradition .**

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20 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2023

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

2 Japanese pros top 2023 HOM

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

Japanese professional cyclists Ryohei Fujita and Rinichiro Shigeta ruled the 2023 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle last Saturday that certainly lived up to the 100-kilometer event's name.

The 26-year-old Fujita and 20-year-old Shigeta crossed the finish line at the old Mariana Resort & Spa property in Marpi in a virtual dead heat (3:17:25) with the former taking first place as the latter yielded to his more senior Saitama Nasu SunBrave teammate.

Third place went to Guam's Ryan Matienzo who came in with a time of 3:19:00.

Both Fujita and Shigeta said through an interpreter that the 2023 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle was difficult as the roads surface were slippery especially during the latter part of the race.

Matienzo, who won the 2022 Saipan Half Marathon, was on the lead majority of the race until the downhill portion from Suicide Cliff when Fujita and Shigeta threw all caution to the wind and pedaled like there was no tomorrow.

The 38-year-old Lipa City, Batangas



MARK RABAGO

Japan's Ryohei Fujita, right, and Rinichiro Shigeta, left, finished 1-2 in the professional and expert division of the 2023 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle last Saturday.

in the Philippines native said he didn't give chase to Fujita and Shigeta anymore when they made their moves.

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune*, Matienzo said he just didn't want to slip and get into a serious accident because at the time the rain was pouring hard and the course was all wet and slippery.

Fujita, Shigeta, and Matienzo earned \$1,000, \$800, and \$500, respectively, for finishing in the Top 3 of the men's pro division of the 100K race.

The Hell of the Marianas snaked its way through Saipan's hills, valleys, and scenic byways—including 4,900 feet of ascents—starting from the aforementioned Mariana Resort & Spa going south along Middle Road as the usual Beach Road route was hindered

by road construction and back to Marpi where the scenic but perilous Suicide Cliff and rolling hills tested their endur-

ance and mental fortitude.

In the non-pro division, Romel Solis of Guam took the cake in 3:37:17, followed by Hyosuk Gong of South Korea in 3:43:14. Completing the Top 3 was local rider Joel Buco in 3:43:53.

The rest of the Top 10 are the following: Arvin Velasco, 3:49:44; Nap Dizon, 4:01:56; Jung Kab Moon, 4:06:54; Sungmin Kim 4:06:57; Sean Ro, 4:07:30; Moon Tae Sung, 4:10:49; and Fred Remilioza, 4:14:32.

Both Moons and Kim hail from South Korea, while the rest are all Saipan riders.

Velasco and company went home with cash prizes ranging from \$300 to \$25.

In the 50K short course road bike category for men, Saipan had a 1-2-3 finish with Dennis Bautista coming in first, Cesar Fortaleza second, and Nelson Pagaduan third with times of 1:41:07, 1:42:48, and 1:42:53, respectively.

The mountain bike men's short course division was ruled by Butch Sublemente (1:43:02) and followed by Raymund Tolentino (1:52:20) and Greg Clark (1:55:55)—all of Saipan.

Results of the women's races will be published in tomorrow's issue of

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2023 Pacific Games: Challenged, celebrated, united

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER



HONIARA, Solomon Islands—The 2023 Pacific Games definitely challenged, celebrated, and united Oceania and Team NMI in the Hapi Isles, the Solomon Islands, for almost three weeks of sport, competition, and camaraderie.

Just as the over 10,000 people in attendance had witnessed the opening of the games, they witnessed the closing of it—which ended just as it had started—with a bang, as it officially drew to a close last Saturday night at the National Sport Stadium.

The Games brought over 100 NMI athletes together from 10 different sports with one mission in mind: haul in medals and make the NMI proud. They could say they have accomplished that and more as they collected 13 medals overall, set and broke NMI records, and won the hearts of the Pacific.



LEIGH GASES

Tania Tan waves the CNMI flag during the 17th Pacific Games closing ceremony in Honiara, Solomon Islands. She was chosen as Team NMI's closing ceremony flagbearer after she stunned the Pacific with an underdog gold medal win in the 5,000m, and setting a new Pacific Games record, and gold in the 10,000m event of athletics competitions last week. She became the first woman in the NMI to win two gold medals in the Pacific Games. She also cruised through the half marathon last Saturday morning and came in fourth as well as broke the NMI record.

Time stood still, but also flew in a cacophony of exhaustion, relentlessness of the human spirit, and drive for success, as the Pacific saw incredible achievements and moments—from underdog victories of small nations, to overpowering domination by powerhouses New Caledonia, Tahiti, and

host Solomon Islands in the Games' 24 sports.

Almost three weeks of the NMI team's hustling in a new environment—which more or less was a tough culture shock; persevering through the circumstances and conditions; on top

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Cheers, hugs welcome Team Marianas home

Team Marianas received a warm welcome from their families, friends, and supporters, and members of the NMI sports community as athletes and officials returned home last Sunday night after competing in the 2023 Pacific Game in Honiara, the Solomon Islands for two weeks.

Banners bearing the athletes and team's names greeted the returning NMI delegates, while there were also exchanges of hugs and offering of leis, flowers, and other welcoming gifts. Every time athletes or officials came out of the door at the arrival area of Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, the crowd gathered outside gave them a round of applause.

"We, parents are all excited to welcome them back. We are all proud of them for what they have accomplished in the 2023 Pacific Games,"

said Yulia Aleksenko, mother of swimmer Isaiah Aleksenko, who brought home and gold medal and bronze in individual events and added two more bronze in relay races.

"At the same time, we are also relieved that they are finally home. We know there were challenges and tough conditions in the Solomon Islands, but they all endured them. Thank you to the coaches, the team officials, and their fellow athletes, for staying together and looking out for each other," said Yulia Aleksenko.

NMI Bodybuilding and Physique Federation president Dee Clayton was also part of the big welcoming group at the airport and was pleased that both their representatives did well in the competition. Christina Tudela came home with the gold medal in the model physique category, while

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The NMI Men's National Football Team's Ruben Guerrero is welcomed by his family members as Team Marianas athletes and officials arrived at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Sunday night.